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SOME
STUMBLING
BLOCKS
OF THE
FRENCH LANGUAGE

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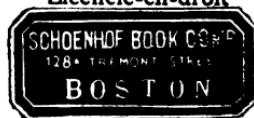
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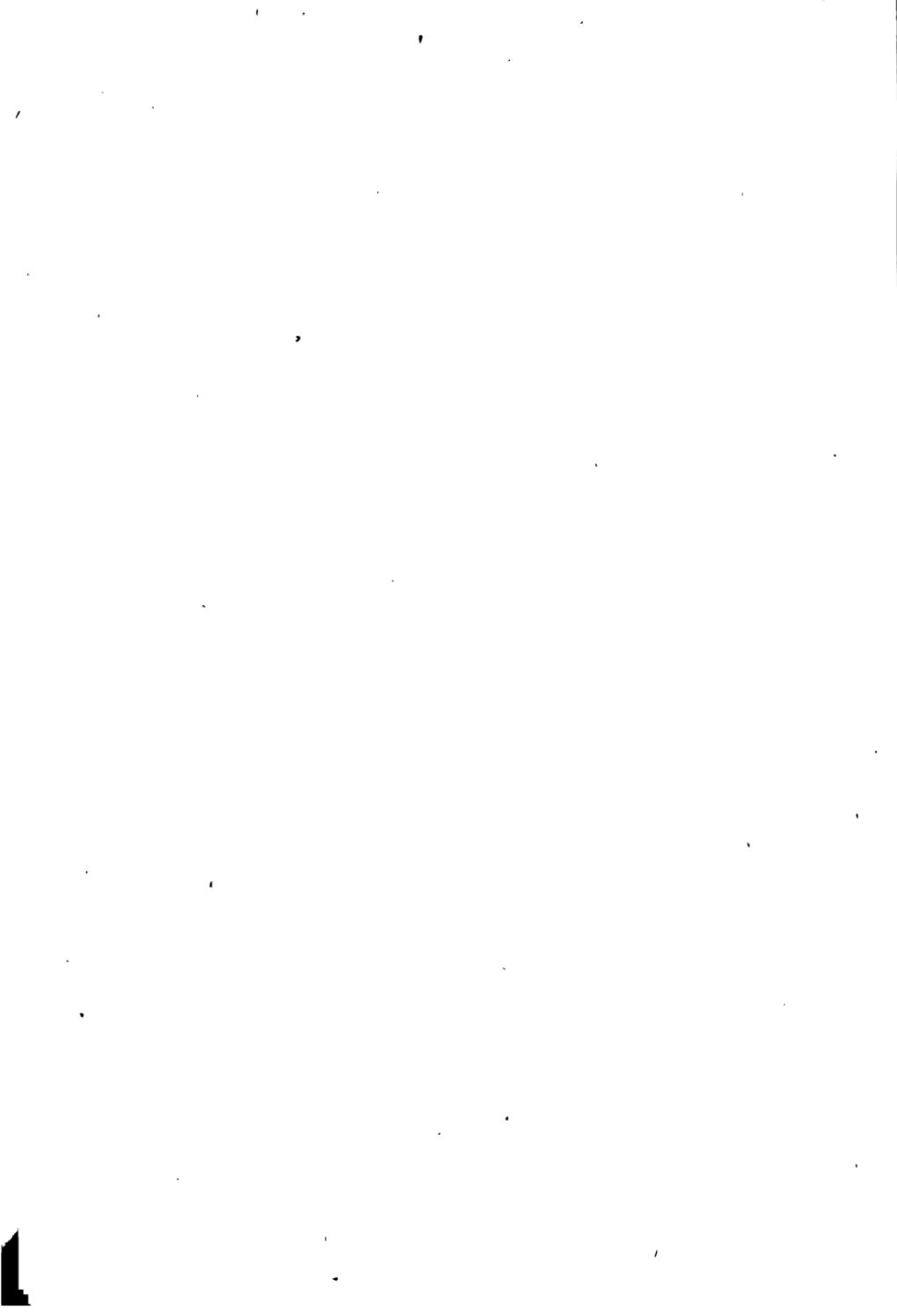
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INTRODUCTION

THIS little book has been written especially for students who have already mastered the rudiments of French, but who, by lack of practice or otherwise, are still "stumbling" into the numerous pitfalls of that beautiful—and difficult—language.

It does not purport to fill the place of any of the French methods, grammars, or hand-books used at present by students. Its aim is to complete them, to a limited extent, by filling up a gap in the long series of these educational works.

The "remarks" and "advices" presented in the following pages are the output of the experience of many years in teaching French. The list of mistakes in pronunciation or construction is unique and very extensive; we are confident that it will materially help the student and facilitate somewhat the task of our fellow teachers.



SYNOPSIS

Part I.—Words similar in French and in English, but with a different meaning.

Part II.—A list of the most common mistakes made in French by English-speaking people.

Part III.—French idiomatic expressions particularly difficult to understand.

Part IV.—English expressions particularly difficult to translate into French.

Part V.—Remarks about the gender of nouns.

Part VI.—Adjectives with a double meaning.

Part VII.—A few practical advices about French verbs.

Part VIII.—Sundry difficulties.

Part IX.—Mistakes in letter writing.

Part X.—Erroneous French quotations.

Part XI.—A few hints to students who have some difficulty in understanding French.

Part XII.—A list of very familiar expressions or words commonly used by the French in conversation or current literature.

Part XIII.—About some English and French affixes, etc.

Part XIV.—About some popular types or characters commonly alluded to in French literature or conversation.

APPENDIX

STUMBLING BLOCKS IN FRENCH PRONUNCIATION

Difficulty No. 1—the letter *s*.

“ No. 2—numbers.

“ No. 3—*et-est*.

“ No. 4—*plus*.

“ No. 5—*tous, tout*.

“ No. 6—the ending “*ent*.”

A FEW PRACTICAL ADVICES ABOUT PRONUNCIATION

- I.—Diphthong *ai, ais.*
- II.—Mistakes arising from careless reading.
- III.—Miscellaneous.
- IV.—Mispronunciation of some proper names in French.

*** SIXTEEN EXERCISES****KEY TO THE EXERCISES**

*Although these exercises do not purport to be interesting—which would be a supernatural accomplishment in a French educational work—they have been at least so construed as to have a meaning.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- adj.—adjective.
- f—feminine.
- fig.—figuratively.
- m.—masculine.
- med.—medical.
- milit.—military.
- plu.—plural.
- sing.—singular.
- subst.—substantive

PART I.

WORDS SIMILAR IN FRENCH AND IN ENGLISH
BUT WITH A DIFFERENT MEANING

FRENCH and English have in common a considerable number of words, but it is a widely spread error to think that the meaning of these words is always the same, or nearly the same, in both languages.

It is commonly supposed, for instance, in America, that **DÉPÔT** is the correct French word for a large **railway station**—while its meaning is that of “stores of materials,” or “round house” for engines. The traveler from New York or London is not a little surprised, when he is in France, to learn that **OFFICE** means **pantry**, and **CHANDELIER**, **candlestick!** He puzzles very much his French friend by tendering him **SES APOLOGIES** instead of **ses excuses**; and he feels indignant when he is directed to the shop of a dealer in **cast off iron**, after he had asked for the address of a **MAGASIN DE BRIC À BRAC**. Much to his embarrassment, he is not understood or he is laughed at when he speaks of the **PRÉJUDICES** of the old nobility, for he should have said **préjugés** and did not mean “damages” in the least. . . . If he goes shopping, he wonders why **ready made clothing** is sold at the sign of **CONFÉCTIONS**, and **bacon** under the name of **LARD**. He cannot imagine why **citron** plays such an important part in French cooking . . . until he chances to learn that this fruit is a plain **lemon**. But his previous experiences will fall into insignificance if, as he is about to retire, he asks for an extra **blanket**, and sees the chambermaid, after much delay, bring him a dish of “**stewed veal!**”

It is against such mistakes that we expect, in the following pages, to warn the student.

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

SECTION A

WORDS WITH THE SAME SPELLING IN FRENCH AND IN ENGLISH

English word	Remarks	Literal meaning of the word in French	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
amiable		amicable		
audience		judicial hearing, interview granted by a high official in the meaning of an assembly of listeners.		
averse (adj.)		shower (subst.)		
ballot		bale		
bat	in the meaning of animal.	pack saddle,		
bric à brac		junk, old stores		
bride		bridle		
brigadier		corporal (cavalry)		
brute	in the meaning of animal.	brutish, stupid (man)		
cabinet		1st, closet 2d, private study (of a doctor, etc.)		
cape	in the meaning of wooden case.	in the meaning of photograph....		
			cape (geography)	bonnet (m)
			format album (m)	une carte format album

<u>case</u>	in the meaning of jewel case..... in the meaning of glass case..... in the legal meaning..... in the medical mean- ing and general mean- ing.....	rst, hut, cabin 2d, pigeon hole.....	<u>écrin</u> (m) vitrine (f) cause (f)
<u>chat</u>	cat.....	cat.....	<u>causerie</u> (f)
<u>charge</u>	in the meaning of cost in the legal meaning.....	load, burden.....	<u>prix</u> (m) <u>accusation</u> (f)
<u>chandelier</u>	.....	candlestick.....	<u>lustre</u> (m)
<u>chiffon</u>	rst, rag 2d, silk muslin.....	rst, rag 2d, silk muslin.....	<u>cédrat</u> (m)
<u>citron</u>	lemon.....	lemon.....	<u>piece de monnaie</u> (f)
<u>coin</u>	corner.....	corner.....	
<u>complexion</u>	in the meaning of color of the skin.....	disposition, constitu- tion.....	<u>teint</u> (m)
<u>confectons</u>	.....	ready made clothing	<u>confiserie</u> (f)
<u>confidence</u>	.....	secret, secrecy	<u>confiance</u> (f)
<u>dejection</u>	.....	evacuation (med.)	<u>abattement</u> <u>dé couagement</u> (m)
<u>dépot</u>	Americanism for sta- tion	deposit, stores of ma- terials	<u>gare</u> , station (f)

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

WORDS WITH THE SAME SPELLING IN FRENCH AND IN ENGLISH

English word	Remarks	Literal meaning of the word in French	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
diligence		speed, stagecoach	soin (m)	
direction	in the meaning of address, in the meaning of orders, etc.	1st, way ad., management	adresse (f) instructions (f pl) insanité (f)	
distraction		thoughtlessness	évenement (m)	
event		air hole	gras	
fat		foppish	honoraires (m pl) droits (m pl)	
fee		fairy	taille, stature (f)	
figure	speaking of people	face	lime (f)	Notice that the English word lime is chau
file	in the meaning of tool in the meaning of a bundle of papers	line, rank	lasse (f)	
gale		itch, scab	tempête (f)	
gaze		gauze	regard (m)	
here			un pauvre here, a miserable fellow un triste here, a contemptible man	
if			yew tree	si

ignoble		ignoble extraction, humble naissance
	humble roturier	
	travail, labeur (m)	
	estropié	
	saindoux (m)	
	gross jambes (pl)	"des jambes arquées, legs de la longue ascendance de paysans déjetés par les rudes travaux de la terre. . . ." Paul Junka—Un vicaire parisien [crooked legs, legacy from a long ancestry of peasants, distorted by rough work in the fields]
disgusting		
	tillage	
	blade (subst.)	
	bacon	
	wide	
	legacy	
	slow (adj.)	Careme (m)
	collection (for letters)	lever [du Roi] (m)
	levy	récception (f)
	lists	poux (m. pl.)
	[to enter the (in tournaments,etc.)	mensonge (m)
	sediment	chaux (f)
	file (tool)	longnon (m)
	opera glass	
	hand	
Lent(subst.)		principal
levee		conduit (m)
lice (subs,pl)		commandant, chef de bataillon, chef d'escadron
lie		
lime		
lorgnette		
main		
	as an adjective in the meaning of pipe.	
major	quarter-master in the army	

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

WORDS WITH THE SAME SPELLING IN FRENCH AND IN ENGLISH

English word	Remarks	Literal meaning of the word in French	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
manger		the action of eating	manger (f)	
mangle		mangrove	calandre (f)	
mare		pool	jument (f)	
mat (subst.)		dull, unpolished (adj.)	natte (subst. f)	
mince	as a verb..... as a noun.....	thin, meager	émincer émincé (m)	pâté d'émincé : mince pie
mire		sight (in fire arms)	boue, fange (f)	
modiste		milliner	couturière (f)	
noise		quarrel *	bruit (m)	* used only in the idiom: chercher noise *
nomination	of candidates	appointment	présentation (f)	
notions	in the meaning of haberdashery.	idea, elementary knowledge	passerby (f)	
office	in the meaning of a place of business	1st, functions ad., pantry	bureau (m)	
or		now, well	ou	
pan		tail of a coat	terrine (f)	
parents		relatives	père et mère	
partition		score (music)	cloison (f)	

passable	of a road	tolerably good	praticable
pathos	bombast		pathétique
petite	short		mignonne
pin	pine-tree		aiguille (f.)
plain	level		simple, clair
plate	in the meaning of earthenware. in the meaning of iron, steel plate	feminine form of plat : flat (adj.)	assiette (f.) plaque (f.)
portion	in the meaning of marriage portion	part, ration	dot (f.) préjugé (m.) rainin sec (m.) effréné
		damage grape creeping	La désertion était effrénée, désertion was rampant
rave (to) v. rapt (adj.)	for instance: a rapt abduction (subst.) glance	turnip, radish (subst.) ravi (adj.)	divaguer (verb) prix, taux (m.)
rate		spleen	royal (adj.)
regal (adj.)		treat (subst.)	égard (m.)
regard		look, glance	Translate however "with kind regards" into "mille amitiés" or "avec mes meilleures souvenirs",
rein		kidney	rêne (f.)
relations	speaking of persons	acquaintances	parents (m. pl.)

WORDS WITH THE SAME SPELLING IN FRENCH AND IN ENGLISH

English word	Remarks	Literal meaning of the word in French	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
relative	in the meaning of kinsfolk.	feminine form of relatif (referring, comparative to)	parent (m) set-off	
relief			soulagement, secours (m)	
report		amount brought forward	bruit (m) rapport (m) rumour (f)	
ride		wrinkle	promenade { ^{tu vois} course (f) } cheval	
rime		rhyme	give (m)	
romance		ballad, song	roman (m)	
rot		roast (meat)	pouriture (f)	
sale		dirty (adj.)	vente (f)	
sensible		sensitive	sensé	
sentence	in the meaning purely grammatical	sentence of a court	phrase (f)	
servant			servante (f)	
slave			serveur (m)	
stage			esclave	
			scène (f) (theater)	
			diligence (f) (coach)	

store		shade (window)
talon	of a bird	heel
tape		slap
tenant		[old French] champion tenant (m)
transportation		removal of convicts across the sea
trivial		vulgar
van		winnowing basket
vent		wind
verge		in the meaning of breathing hole.....
verger		rod
		orchard
		magasin (m)
		serre (f)
		cordon (m), ruban (m)
		locataire
		tenancier (m)
		transport (m)
		léger
		insignificant
		voiture (f)
		passage (m)
		soupirail (m)
		bord, point (m)
		bedeau (m)

SECTION B
WORDS WITH A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE IN THE SPELLING

English word	Remarks	French word	Meaning of the French word	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
adjutant		adjudant	sergeant-major	adjudant-major	
apology	in the meaning of excuse.	apologie	always a writing or a discourse to justify some one	excuse (f)	
artificer		artificier	fireworks maker; artillery: bombardier	artisan (m)	
ass		as	ace	âne (m)	
advertisement		avvertissement	warning	réclame (f)	
back		bac	ferry-boat	dos (m)	
bankrupt		banqueroute	fraudulent bankruptcy	faillite	bankruptcy is faille
barrack		baraque	shed, hovel	caserne (f)	
beck		bec	beak, bill	signe (m)	
blanket		blanquette	stewed veal	couverture (f)	
cabin		cabine	stateroom	cabane (f)	
chart		charte	charter	carte marine (f)	
character	in the meaning of behavior.	caractère	[in some meanings like in English] temper	conduite (f)	Elle a une mauvaise conduite
	in the meaning of testimonial.				She is a bad character
					recommendation (f)

chop		chope	glass of bier	côtelette (f)
clerk		clerc	an attorney's clerk a bailiff's clerk	commis (m)
co-respondent	in a divorce suit	correspondant	correspondent	complice (m. f.)
fabric	in the meaning of cloth.	fabrique	factory	fabrication (f)
fastidious		fastidieux	monotonous	tissu (m)
gay		gai	cheerful	difficile (à satis- faire)
glass		glace	ice	bon vivant
injury		injure	insult	verre (m)
jolly		joli	pretty	dommage (m)
luxury		luxure	lust	gai
luxurious		luxueux	lewd	luxe (m)
nap		nappe	table cloth	luxueux
obedience		obéissance	obedience	somme (m)
ore		or	gold	révérence (f)
partner		partenaire	partner at cards	mineraï (m)
patent		patente	license	associé (m)
proprietary		propriété	property	brevet d'invention (m)
raffle		raffle	action of sweeping stakes, etc.	convenance (f)
ragout		ragout	meat stew. <i>Very</i> <i>seldom:</i> ragout	loterie (f)
rent		rente	income	fumet (m)
				loyer (m)

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

WORDS WITH A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE IN THE SPELLING

English word	Remarks	French word	Meaning of the French word	To translate the word into French, USE:	Examples
resort	in the meaning of recourse.	ressort	spring (mechanics)	station (d'été, etc)	
france				recours (m)	
tart				ressource (f)	
umbrella				extase (f)	
vane				tartelette (f)	
viands				parapluie (m)	
				girouette (f)	
				comestibles (m. pl)	

PART II.

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES

MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

EXPERIENCE has shown that for several reasons the mistakes hereafter enumerated are extremely frequent in conversation.

Every one of our examples has been supplied, not by a single pupil, but by a very large number of advanced students, either American or English, who all committed the same error, when coming in contact with that particular "stumbling block."

This list appears for the first time in a French educational work. If carefully and intelligently studied, it will prove of great value to the student who earnestly wishes to attain such proficiency as to be able to speak French correctly—an accomplishment, the possession of which constitutes the most important advantage to be derived from the study of the language.

PART II.

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
I get up early	Je me lève à la bonne heure	* —————de bonne heure	À la bonne heure means: well done; all right
I went to Paris	j'ai allé à Paris	je suis allé —	aller is a verb of motion
I do } without a carriage go } if some one sneezes]	je fais } sans voiture je vais }	je me passe de —	
	une tasse à thé	une tasse de thé	tasse à thé means: tea-cup
	à votre santé!	que Dieu vous bénisse!	à votre santé! means: to your health!
he is an acquaintance of mine	c'est une de mes acquain-tances	c'est une de mes connaissances	
an accommodation train	un train d'accommodation	un train mixte	
if agreeable to you	si agréable à vous	si cela vous est agréable	je suis agréable means: I am nice, pleasant
I am agreeable	je suis agréable	je suis d'accord	l'affaire du cœur means: the heart's business
it is an affair of the heart	c'est l'affaire du cœur	c'est une affaire de cœur	[a very common mistake]
how do you like the play?	comment aimez vous la piece	comment trouvez vous	
I like him	je l'aime	je l'aime bien je l'aime beaucoup	je l'aime alone is too em-phatic to translate: I like him. Strange as it seems, the adverb bien (or beau-coup) lessens here the qual-ity expressed by the verb
it looks like rain	il a l'air de pluie	on dirait qu'il va pleuvoir	* The dash is used here to avoid a useless repetition of words

call for me at six o'clock	appelez pour moi à six heures	venez me chercher --
to send in an application	envoyer une application	envoyer une demande
apply to this office	appliquez vous à cet office	adressez vous à ce bureau <small>s'appliquer à means: to give one's attention to. office means: pantry (two very common mistakes)</small>
come near the table	approchez la table	approchez-vous de la table <small>approchez la table means: bring the table nearer</small>
he is the doctor's assistant	Il est l'assistant du docteur	c'est l'aide — <small>a witness, a bystander.</small>
attendance is free		l'attendance est libre <small>le service est gratuit; [med.] les soins sont gratuits</small>
I expect to go		j'attends à aller <small>je compte aller</small>
I shall attend your party		j'assisterai à votre partie <small>j'assisterai à votre soirée [reception, etc.]</small>
I will attend to it		j'attendrai à cela <small>il demeure dans un attique</small>
he lives in an attic		je vais au dentiste <small>la fille avec les yeux bleus aux yeux bleus</small>
I go to the dentist		chez le dentiste <small>aidiez moi à mettre mon habit</small>
the girl with the blue eyes		chez le dentiste <small>aidiez moi à mettre mon habit</small>
help me on with my coat		chez le dentiste <small>aidiez moi à mettre mon habit</small>
I am angry with you		contre vous <small>assisster does not usually mean material help; avec is not used with aider</small>

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
have you been here long?	avez-vous été ici long-temps?	combien y-a-t-il de temps que vous êtes ici?	
I shall have a hat made...	j'aurai faire un chapeau	je ferai faire —	
he is an old bachelor	c'est un vieux bachelier	c'est un vieux gargon	bachelier means always a B.A., etc.
the balance of your account.	la balance de votre compte	le solde de votre compte	s'compte means installment, etc.
the banks of the river	les bancs de la rivière	les bords —	
good morning!	bon matin!	bonjour!	
I spent the summer in the country.	j'ai dépensé l'été dans la campagne	j'ai passé l'été à la campagne	dans la campagne means: in the fields dépenser is used for money or strength, only
he has no brains [figuratively]	il n'a pas de cervelle	il n'a pas de cervelle	cerveau is always taken in its literal meaning
every one in his turn	chacun dans son tour	chacun son tour	
the pastor went up to the pulpit	le pasteur est monté en chair	— en chaire	chair means: flesh. The sentence would convey the idea that the clergyman has become fatter
I have not the way of getting it	je n'ai pas le chemin de le procurer	je n'ai pas le moyen de me le procurer	chemin means: road.
how often have you been there?	combien souvent avez vous été là?	combien de fois —	[a gross and a very common mistake] ditto
how far is it?	combien loin est-ce?	a quelle distance est-ce?	

how long did you wait?	combien longtemps avez-vous attendu?	combien de temps —	ditto
how old is your brother?	combien vieux est votre frère?	quel âge à votre frère?	
the same as before	le même comme avant	le même qu'avant	
she is a companion to Mrs. X.	elle est compagnon de Mme. X.	elle est demoiselle (dame) de compagnie de Mme. X.	
the peasant's cottage	le cottage du paysan	la chaumière —	
let it cost what it may	Idiom: coûte que coûte	coûte que coûte	
in the morning	dans le matin	le matin, au matin	
the finest in the world	le plus beau dans le monde	— du monde	
I thought of you	J'ai pensé de vous	à vous	
the prisoner was discharged	le prisonnier a été décharge	le prévenu a été acquitté	
I am in a hurry	je suis dans une dépêche	je suis pressé	
last Monday	le dernier lundi	lundi dernier	
a friend of mine	un ami des miens	un de mes amis	
to land	désembarquer	débarquer	
he has shown his devotion to me	Il m'a montré sa dévotion	son dévouement —	dévotion is devotedness, piety
did you speak to him about me	lui avez-vous dit de moi?	parlé —	dire means: to say

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
the carriage is before the door	la voiture est avant la porte	— devant la porte	avant is not: in front of
this man is distracted by the death of his wife	cet homme est distracté par la mort de sa femme	cet homme est affolé —	distract means: inattentive, absent-minded
that gives me pleasure	cela me donne du plaisir	— fait plaisir	
I asked of a passer by	j'ai demandé d'un passant	— à un passant	
the train is due at 6:30	le train est dû à 6:30	— doit arriver à 6:30	
this cook is economical	cette cuisinière est économique	— est économique	économique is said of a money-saving device, not of a person
take my trunks up stairs, down stairs	prenez mes malles en haut, en bas	montez, descendez mes malles	
I heard that	j'ai entendu que . . .	j'ai { entendu dire que . . . apris que . . .	[a most frequent mistake]
I heard from my brother	j'ai entendu de mon frère	j'ai reçu des nouvelles de mon frère	
I heard about the accident	j'ai entendu de l'accident	j'ai entendu parler de l'accident	
she is very enthusiastic	elle est très enthousiaste	— enthousiaste	
I sent for the doctor	j'ai envoyé pour le docteur	j'ai envoyé chercher —	
listen to me	écoutez à moi	écoutez moi	
I was eating, sleeping, etc.	j'étais mangeant, dormant etc.	je mangeais, je dormais, etc.	a too common mistake, for which there is no excuse etc.
I was slumbering	j'étais { sommeil j'avais	je sommeillais	j'avais sommeil means: I was sleepy

I took the horses to the stables	j'ai pris les chevaux à l'étable	<i>prendre</i> is never used in the meaning of <i>to lead</i> , etc. <i>étable</i> is used for cattle, not for horses
go and see him	allez et voyez le	allez le voir
this girl has some expectations	cette fille a des expectations	cette jeune fille a des c-s- pérances
I expect to go there	j'espèce d'aller là	je compte aller —
I had a strange experience	<i>j'ai eu une étrange ex- périence</i>	— aventure
He works for a living	il travaille pour une exist- ence	— pour vivre
he makes a living by . . .	il fait une existence en . . .	il gagne sa vie en . . .
he made 300,000 francs this year	il a fait 300,000 francs cet an	il a gagné 300,000 francs cette année
that makes me sick	cela me fait malade	cela me rend malade
this is not my best accomplishment	ce n'est pas mon forte	ce n'est pas mon fort
he has many bad habits	il a bien des fautes	— défauts
the furnace of this house	le fourneau de cette mai- son	le calorifère —
he bought a set of furniture for the parlor	il a acheté une fourniture pour le salon	il a acheté un mobilier —
this man is a fraud	cet homme est une fraude	cet homme est un imposteur
		fraude is never used when speaking of persons. Its usual meaning is smug- gling

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
the owner of the hotel	le maître d'hôtel	— de l'hôtel	maitre d'hôtel means butler, steward
the fifth of January	le cinquième de Janvier	le cinq janvier	Notice that months do not take a capital
she plays indifferently	elle joue indifféremment	elle joue médiocrement	indifféremment means without attention, thoughtlessly
I am interested in him	je suis intéressé à lui	je m'intéresse à lui	
I am anxious to go there	je suis inquiète d'y aller	— anxieuse d'y aller.	
introduce me to Miss N.	introduisez moi à Mlle. N.	Il me tarde d'y aller.	
read the items on this bill	lisez les items sur cette note	présentez moi à Mlle. N.	
I wish to join your class	je désire joindre votre classe	lisez les articles —	
do you play chess?	jouez-vous des échecs	je désire me joindre à —	
do you play on the violin?	jouez-vous sur le violon	jouez-vous aux —	
I had a pleasant journey	j'ai eu une plaisante journée	jouez vous du —	
my uncle is justice of the peace	mon oncle est justice de paix	j'ai fait un plaisant voyage	journée means a day's work, a whole day
I shall let you know	je vous laisserai savoir	— juge de paix	justice de paix is the court
We shall leave town by noon	nous laisserons la ville à midi	je vous ferai savoir	
		nous quitterons —	

the teacher gave us a lecture	<u>le maître nous a donné une lecture</u>	lecture means: reading
I met Miss N.	<u>j'ai rencontré la demoiselle N.</u>	
The Misses B. were there	<u>les mesdemoiselles B. y étaient</u>	
I remained home	<u>J'ai resté à ma maison</u>	<u>je suis resté chez moi</u> [or: à la maison] rester requires the auxiliary être
I was at the opera yesterday; the house was full	<u>j'étais à l'Opéra hier; la maison était pleine</u>	<u>la salle était pleine</u>
I miss my friend	<u>je manque mon ami</u>	<u>mon ami me manque</u> <u>je manque mon ami means:</u> <u>I fail to meet my friend</u>
to walk up and down	<u>marcher en haut et en bas</u>	<u>de long en large</u> [or: <u>faire les cent pas</u>]
she will not marry him	<u>elle ne veut pas le marier</u>	<u>l'épouser</u>
this man is a mechanic	<u>cet homme est un mécanique</u>	<u>un artisan</u>
I saw the doctor	<u>J'ai vu le médecin</u>	<u>le médecin</u>
I like it better	<u>je l'aime meilleur</u>	<u>mieux</u>
I burned my finger	<u>j'ai brûlé mon doigt</u>	<u>je me suis brûlé le doigt</u>
He lost his money	<u>Il a perdu sa monnaie</u>	<u>son argent</u> <u>money is change</u>

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
the morale of the army was bad	la morale de l'armée était mauvaise	le moral de l'armée était mauvais	la morale is the morality le moral is the spirits
she is a musician	elle est musicale	— musicienne	
he was born at Paris	il était né en Paris	il est né à Paris	to be born is translated into naître, the past of which is je suis né. A is used with cities, en with countries
I am reading a new book by X., which brother gave me	je lis un livre neuf par X., que frère m'a donné	un nouveau livre par X., que mon frère m'a donné	un livre neuf means: a book never used, quite clean, etc. Here un nouveau livre is a newly published book
have you worked much to-day?	avez vous beaucoup ouvré } aujourd'hui	avez vous beaucoup travaillé —	these words are not French
it is a little pamphlet on the "Trusts."	c'est un petit pamphlet sur les "Trusts."	une petite brochure	pamphlet has always the aggressive meaning
the Sunday paper	le papier du dimanche	le journal —	
the criminal was pardoned	le criminel a été pardonné	— gracié	
it is noon by my watch	il est midi par ma montre	— à ma montre	
He works by the hour	il travaille par l'heure	— à l'heure	
He sells them by the weight	il les vend par le poids	— au poids	
give me some particulars on the accident	donnez moi des particulières sur l'accident	des détails —	un particulier means: an individual

this store has many patrons in the wealthy classes	<u>ce magasin a beaucoup de patrons dans les classes riches</u>	<u>de clients [or pratiques]</u>	patron is employer (America: "boss")
to pay a call	<u>payer une visite</u>	<u>faire une visite</u>	[a common mistake]
to have a pain in the head	<u>avoir une peine dans la tête</u>	<u>avoir mal à la tête</u>	peine is generally moral suffering
the performance of Hamlet	<u>la performance d'Hamlet</u>	<u>la représentation</u>	
there were many people at the concert	<u>il y était beaucoup de peuple au concert</u>	<u>il y avait beaucoup de monde</u>	Here people would mean rabbble
a grand piano	<u>un grand piano</u>	<u>un piano à queue</u>	grand piano means: a big piano
in the course of my pursuits	<u>au cours de mes poursuites</u>	<u>travaux</u>	
I am afraid I am sick	<u>j'ai peur que je sois malade</u>	<u>j'ai peur d'être malade</u>	1, large is wide .
Marseille is a large place	<u>Marseille est une large place</u>	<u>une grande ville</u>	2, place, in reference to cities, is used only in the expressions: place de commerce , place forte
he is more and more impertinent every day	<u>il est plus et plus impertinent chaque jour</u>	<u>de plus en plus</u>	
I went there several times	<u>j'y suis allé plusieurs temps</u>	<u>fois</u>	
I would rather go myself	<u>j'irais plus tôt moi même</u>	<u>plutôt</u>	
I bought a pineapple	<u>j'ai acheté une pomme de pin</u>	<u>un ananas</u>	plus tôt in two words means: earlier
the captain of the ship was on the bridge	<u>le capitaine du navire était sur le pont</u>	<u>la passerelle</u>	pomme de pin means: fir cone
			point, in nautical terms, means: deck

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
take that child to school	<u>portez cet enfant à l'école</u>	menez —	porter is to carry in the arms.
send for the carriage	<u>envoyez pour la voiture</u>	envoyez chercher —	
I am waiting for an opportunity	<u>j'attends pour une opportunité</u>	j'attends une occasion	
look for your hat	<u>cherchez pour votre chapeau</u>	cherchez votre chapeau	
I suffered for one hour	<u>j'ai souffert pour une heure</u>	j'ai souffert pendant une heure	
Doctor N. has a large practice	<u>docteur N. a une grande pratique</u>	le docteur N. a une grande clientèle	Here, pratique would mean: experience; les pratiques mean: the customers
I heard a good preacher in this church	<u>j'ai entendu un bon prêcheur à cette église</u>	— prédicateur —	précheur is now obsolete in French
I will take the chances to take a walk	<u>je prendrai les chances prendre une promenade</u>	je courrai les risques faire —	
this took place in 1840	<u>cela a pris place en 1840</u>	a eu lieu [or: s'est passé] —	prendre place means: to take seats
I am ready to go with you	<u>je suis près à aller avec vous</u>	je suis prêt à —	près means: near
this meeting would not be proper	<u>cette rencontre ne serait pas propre</u>	— convenable	proper is: clean
this teacher has many pupils	<u>ce maître a beaucoup de pupilles</u>	d'élèves	pupille is: ward, in the legal sense of the word

as for me, I do not like that	quand à moi, je n'aime pas cela	quand is: when
the moment I saw him	au moment que je l'ai vu	au moment où —
this is a race horse	c'est un cheval de race	cheval de race means: thoroughbred
my watch is right	ma montre a raison	va bien
he was sick, but he recovered	il a été malade, mais il a recouvré	s'est guéri
give me back my gloves	redonnez moi mes gants	rendez moi —
it is a good-looking man	c'est un homme qui regarde bien	c'est un bel homme
look at me	regardez à moi	regardez moi
my apartment looks into the park	mon appartement regarde dans le parc	donne sur —
I met with an accident	j'ai rencontré un accident	il m'est arrivé un accident
rest a moment	reste-toi un moment	reposez-vous —
let us resume our conversation	résumons notre conversation	reprendons —
you are laughing at me	vous riez à moi	vous moquez de moi
enter the waiting room	entrez la salle d'attente	entrez dans la salle d'attente
do you know this man?	savez vous cet homme?	connaissez-vous cet homme?
I am satisfied that you do not speak the truth by so doing, he saved 30,000 francs a year	je suis satisfait que vous ne parlez pas le vrai de cette façon il a sauvé 30,000 francs un an	je suis convaincu que vous ne dites pas la vérité de cette façon il a gagné 30,000 francs par an
		connaitre is the proper word for to be acquainted with
		satisfait means: pleased

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
this child does not know how to read	cet enfant ne sait pas comment lire	— ne sait pas lire	
I have so much work that	j'ai si tellement de travail, que	j'ai tant de travail, que — roussi —	singer is: to ape
she has singed her hair	elle a singé ses cheveux	il à l'air sobre, car il vient de perdre —	sobre is always: temperate, not drunk
he looks sober, for he has just lost at the races	il à juste perdu aux courses	quand vous sortez —	quand requires the future tense, when the action expressed by the verb is merely accidental
when you go out please mail this letter	quand vous sortez, mettez cette lettre à la poste, s'il vous plaît	si vous sortez, fermez la porte d'entrée	If it is a customary action, the present is used: quand vous sortez (whenever you go out) vous laissez toujours la porte ouverte
If you go out, shut the front door	i'ai laissé sortir le feu	— étendre —	si never requires the future tense, except when it means whether
I let the fire go out	<u>j'ai pris une souscription au "Figaro."</u>	— un abonnement —	souscription is: share-list, etc.
I took a subscription to the "Figaro," he cannot succeed in business	<u>il ne peut pas succéder en affaires</u>	— réussir —	succéder means: to succeed to, to come after [a common mistake]
I am cold	je suis froid	j'ai froid	

he will come on Thursday	<u>il viendra sur jeudi</u>	<u>il viendra jeudi</u>	<u>sympathique</u> means: con-
when I told him of my sorrow, he was very sympathetic	<u>quand je lui ai parlé de mon chagrin, il a été très sympathique</u>	<u>— il m'a montré de la sympathie</u>	<u>genial</u>
I am late	<u>je suis tard</u>	<u>je suis en retard</u>	<u>tard</u> is used only in such expressions as <u>il est tard, sur le tard</u> , etc.
my watch is late	<u>ma montre est tard</u>	<u>ma montre retarde</u>	
give me a postage stamp	<u>donnez moi un timbre de poste</u>	<u>— timbre poste</u>	
I like to travel in the mountains	<u>j'aime à travailler dans les montagnes</u>	<u>voyager —</u>	<u>travailler</u> means: <u>to work [a gross and inexcusable mistake]</u>
an excursion train	<u>un train d'excursion</u>	<u>un train de plaisir</u>	
very much	<u>très beaucoup</u>	<u>extrêmement</u>	
I have been mistaken	<u>j'ai été trompé</u>	<u>je me suis trompé</u>	<u>j'ai été trompé</u> means: <u>some one [or something] deceived me</u>
the trouble is that	<u>le trouble est que</u>	<u>le malheur est que</u>	
I had much trouble with that lawsuit	<u>j'ai eu beaucoup de troubles avec ce procès</u>	<u>— de difficultés —</u>	
What is the trouble?	<u>Quel est le trouble?</u>	<u>De quoi s'agit-il?</u>	
Do not trouble yourself	<u>Ne vous troublez pas</u>	<u>Ne vous gênez pas</u>	<u>Ne vous troublez pas</u> means: <u>do not get confused, 'mixed up'</u>
This servant is well trained	<u>ce domestique est bien entraîné</u>	<u>stylé —</u>	<u>entraîné</u> is used in matters of sports
Are you not in a hurry? —Yes, I am	<u>n'êtes vous pas pressé? —Oui je le suis</u>	<u>— Si, je le suis</u>	

A LIST OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE IN FRENCH BY ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

If you mean	Do not say	Say or write	Remarks
he is a private tutor in Mr. X.'s family	il est tuteur dans la famille de Mr. X.	— précepteur —	tuteur means: guardian
he will come in a few days	il viendra dans un peu de jours	— quelques jours	un peu means: a little [a very common mistake]
he uses a silver knife	il use un couteau d'argent	— se sert d'un couteau	user is: to wear out
I had a good time	j'ai eu un bon temps	— du bon temps	this expression, although much used, is not grammatically correct; it is therefore better to say or write: je me suis bien amusé
I saw him a few times	je l'ai vu quelques temps	— quelquefois	quelque temps [singular] means: for a while
I sell it three francs a meter	je le vends trois francs un mètre	— le mètre	
he is worth a million	il vaut un million	— il est riche d'un million	
he slammed the door with a vengeance	il claqu'a la porte avec une vengeance	— furieusement	
I learned three verses by heart	j'ai appris trois vers par cœur	— trois strophes —	un vers is: a line only
I am coming for you	je viens pour vous	— vous chercher	
this infant is three weeks old	ce petit enfant est vieux de trois semaines	— est âgé de —	

he is the villain in this play	Il est le vilain dans ce jeu	il est le traître dans cette pièce
she is visiting my sister in the country	elle visite ma sœur à la campagne	elle est en visite chez ma sœur _____
come quickly	venez vite	vite _____
I shall see him to the door	je le verrai à la porte	je le conduirai _____
We are going to see the sights of the place	nous allons voir les vues de la ville	les curiosités _____
after having seen him, I said . . .	après l'ayant vu, je dis . . .	après l'avoir vu _____
respectfully yours	votre respectueusement	je reste, avec respect votre très dévoué (or votre humble serviteur)
will you have this box?	voulez-vous avoir cette boîte?	voulez vous cette boîte? _____
it is a grand sight	c'est une grande vue	c'est un magnifique spec- tacle _____

visiter is generally used when speaking of the sights of a city, etc.

je le verrai à la porte would mean: I shall behold him, etc.

See "Mistakes in Letter-Writing," page 56

grand here would mean: large, big

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

To this list of gross and unpardonable mistakes, we add the following, which may be left out by students who do not wish to make a special study of French rhetoric.

It contains some faulty expressions which are quite excusable in a foreigner, because most of them are commonly used in France, except by the very few who have mastered—and not forgotten—the deepest arcana of the grammar.

Remarks	Do not say or write	Say or write
If you mean an action which will continue, go on and increase	commencer de commencer à	commencer à cet enfant commence à marcher
If you mean an action of limited duration	commencer à	commencer de j'ai commencé d'écrire ma lettre
If you mean an action of long duration	continuer de	continuer à il continue à exercer la médecine
If the duration is very limited	continuer à	continuer de il continue d'écrire sa lettre
In the meaning of to dare	défier à boire	défier de boire
In the meaning of to challenge	défier de boire	défier à boire
In the meaning of to escape something	échapper de	échapper à échapper à la prison
In the meaning of to escape from	échapper à	échapper de échapper de prison (from)
If you use to borrow in the sense of to draw from figuratively	emprunter à	emprunter de il a emprunté ce passage de (from) Longfellow; otherwise use à
If you speak of a present occupation which is of little importance	s'occuper de	s'occuper à il s'occupe à lire le journal

If you mean something important and of s'occuper à long duration	s'occuper de	obliguer } à contraindre } force } Tâchez d'obliger vos sujets à vous aimer
If you speak of something which cannot be accomplished without a considerable delay	de	obliger } de contraindre } force } je suis obligé de sortir
If you mean a well determined action, to be done at once	à	oublier de } contraindre } force } j'ai oublié de prendre mon parapluie
If it is on a particular occasion	à	oublier à } j'ai oublié à parler allemand depuis que je suis en Amérique cela ne vous sert à rien
In the meaning of to have lost the habit of something	de	oublier de } cela ne vous sert de rien cela ne vous sert à rien
If you wish to say that a thing is temporarily useless		il souffre de parler } il souffre à vous } entendre dire cela
If it is permanently useless		il souffre à parler
physical pain		il souffre à vous
mental pain		entendre dire cela

PART III.

FRENCH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

SOME French idioms, which are very commonly used in conversation as well as in literature, are seldom clearly understood, if understood at all, by English-speaking people. On account of their importance in the language, the student should give them all his attention.

De quoi s'agit-il?	What is the question [the point, the subject]?
Il s'agit de.....	The thing [the point at issue] is to..... The question is.....
Donner dans.....	To indulge in..... [Il donne maintenant dans la théosophie. He indulges now in studying, etc. His hobby is now, etc.....]
S'en donner	To give one's self up to it. To have one's fill of it.
Etre en train de.....	To be just [reading, doing, etc.]
En vouloir à.....	[A very common expression, derived from: vouloir du mal à]. To have a grudge against, to be set against. [Je vous en veux. I have a grudge against you. On ne peut lui en vouloir. One cannot blame him.]
Faire ses embarras	To fuss.
Se faire à.....	To get used to.....
Comment se fait-il que.....	How is it that.....
{ Il ne s'en faut pas de beaucoup { que [je ne vous donne]}	There is little wanting for [my giving to you]—I feel very much like giving, etc.

Gêner.....	[a very useful verb in French] for dress, etc.: to be too tight. [Cet habit me gêne. This coat is too tight.] otherwise: to be in the way. to inconvenience.
Se jouer de	To overcome lightly. To mock at.
Je tiens à cela.	I am very tenacious of it. I am much attached to it. I "stick" to it.
Je n'y tiens pas.	I do not care much for it. [speaking of things only]
Qu'à cela ne tienne !	Never mind that! Do not let that be any objection!
A quoi cela tient-il?	What's that owing to? [Tenir is a very idiomatic verb in French. In that respect it ranks immediately after Faire. However it is but little known to foreigners. Compare to the German: "halten".]
Travailler à façon.	To make up people's own material. Couturière à façon.
Se mettre [bien, mal.]	To dress [well, badly.]
Se mettre à	To set about.....
Venir.....	Notice the difference between Je viens écrire, I come to write. Je viens d'écrire, I have just written. Si je viens à écrire, If I happen to write.
Vous ne sauriez être trop prudent.	You could not be too prudent.
Il n'aurait qu'à [nous apercevoir , nous surprendre, etc.]!	He might [spy us out, catch us], or Suppose he.....etc.
Tantôt.	[This adverb is often misused] Alone it means By and by, this afternoon. [Je viendrai tantôt. I shall come this afternoon.]
	In repetition: Now.....then.

Avoir beau [dire, faire.]	To be no use [saying, doing]—to do, to say in vain.
Faire l'effet de	To look like
J'ai acheté pour un franc de pommes.	I bought one franc worth of apples.
Je me soucie peu de	I do not care much for I do not like much to
Qu'est-ce que cela me fait?	What is that to me?
A qui mieux mieux.	Striving with each other. [Ils mangent à qui mieux mieux. They vie with each other in eating.]
Je ferai de mon mieux.	I shall do my best.
A la queue leu leu*	In single file.
Faites en autant!	Do the same!
Si cela ne vous gène pas trop.	If it is not too much trouble.
Le premier Paris du "Temps."	The Times' editorial.
Au fur et à mesure.‡	In proportion as

* leu, old French for loup (wolf), “like wolves, one behind the tail of the other.”

‡ fur, from the latin forum, market, then rate, price. Used only in this idiomatic expression.

This expression	Does not mean	It means
Battre les cartes	to strike the cards	to shuffle the cards
Cinq francs pièce	a five francs piece	five francs a piece
Se faire du mauvais sang	to suffer from blood poisoning	to fret about
Faire face à quelqu'un	to make "faces" to some one	to face some one
Faire foin de	to make hay out of. . . . *	to despise something { to stand one behind another
Faire queue	to make a tail	) to wait for one's turn to lead a fast life
Faire la vie	to make a living	a porter
Un homme de peine	a man who has troubles	I have a mind to { I want
J'ai envie de	I am envious of	a domestic disturbance
Un renne ménage	a removal (moving house)	to receive a bribe (a little place to stop at
Recevoir un pot de vin	to receive a pitcher of wine	) a "little crib", the open sea
Un pied à terre	a foot on the ground	to hold fast at the table
La pleine mer	the full sea	to behave well at table
Se tenir bien à table	it hurts my feelings to believe	this will lead you to Market Street
Vous tomberez ainsi dans la rue du Marché	Vous thus you will fall Market Street	it hurts my feelings to believe a member of the society of the Knights of Labor
J'ai peine à croire	it hurts my feelings to believe	to have a local disease
Un chevalier d'industrie	Un member of the society of the Knights of Labor	to think ill of one self
Avoir le mal du pays	to be home sick	to be in one's estates
Se trouver mal	to faint	to be quite upset
Etre dans tous ses états	* foin, here, means "skunk" in the dialect of Berry, in Central France.	

REMARK

To get. The translation of this verb into French often leads to serious mistakes.

I.—To get must not be indiscriminately translated by procurer or se procurer. The latter has a meaning of extensiveness which does not always exist in "to get." For instance,

"In what store did you get this hat?"

could not be rendered accurately by:

"Dans quel magasin vous êtes vous procuré ce chapeau?" which means:

"In what store and by which devices did you succeed in getting this hat?"

All depends, as a rule, upon the meaning attached to the verb in each particular case.

EXAMPLES

I cannot get my key out of the lock.

Je ne peux pas retirer ma clé de la serrure.

I cannot get this book, for the shelf is too high for me.

Je ne peux pas prendre ce livre, . . . etc.

II.—To get followed by an adjective or a past participle can generally be rendered by a REFLECTIVE VERB in French.

EXAMPLES

to get rich: s'enrichir.

to get drunk: s'enivrer.

to get married: se marier.

to get lost: se perdre.

If no reflective verb is available use: devenir.

Example: devenir vieux
 " paresseux } to get old, etc.
 " grognon }

PART V.

REMARKS

ABOUT THE GENDER OF NOUNS

I.—BEWARE of the so-called Rules on the gender of French nouns. They are mostly misleading and unpractical.

II.—Above all do NOT rely upon that ancient twaddle which has spread everywhere—except in France—the idea that nouns ending in “e” mute are feminine. Hundreds of such nouns are masculine, including many in very common use. Exceptions to this so-called rule are so many indeed that we never found yet a student or a teacher able to give them all out without referring to his grammar.

The gender of most nouns can only be learned by practice and usage.

III.—Many nouns have A DOUBLE GENDER in French. As their meaning changes with the gender, it is advisable for the student to become conversant with the following list, which includes only nouns in common use.

Do not say:

un aide [an assistant]	for	une aide [aid]
le claque [opera-hat]	"	la claque [slap]
le coche [coach]	"	la coche [notch]
le couple [husband and wife]	"	une couple [two of a kind]
le crêpe [crape]	"	la crêpe [pancake]
le critique [critic]	"	la critique [criticism]
le finale [finale (music)]	"	la finale [ending (word)]
le foudre [wine vat]	"	la foudre [thunderbolt]
le garde [keeper]	"	la garde [military watch]
le guide [guide]	"	la guide [rein]
le livre [book]	"	la livre [pound]
le manche [handle]	"	la manche [sleeve]
le manœuvre [workman]	"	la manœuvre [maneuver]
le mode [mood]	"	la mode [fashion]
le moule [mould]	"	la moule [mussel]
le mousse [cabin-boy]	"	la mousse [froth]
le pendule [pendulum]	"	la pendule [timepiece]
le pique [spade]	"	la pique [pike]
le poêle [stove]	"	la poêle [frying pan]
le poste [military post]	"	la poste [post-office]
le pupille [ward]	"	la pupille [pupil (of eye)]
le solde [balance of account]	"	la solde [military pay]
le somme [slumber]	"	la somme [sum]
le tour [turn]	"	la tour [tower]
le vase [vase]	"	la vase [slime]
le voile [veil]	"	la voile [sail]

PART VI.**ADJECTIVES WITH A DOUBLE MEANING**

SOME adjectives in French have a different meaning, according as they are placed before or after the noun. This is a fact generally known to students. It is nevertheless the cause of a great many mistakes, for the very simple rule which governs the matter is not exposed clearly in most grammars. Errors will be nearly always avoided by keeping in mind that usually these adjectives, when taken in their literal sense FOLLOW, and when taken figuratively PRECEDE the substantive.

ADJECTIVES WITH A DOUBLE MEANING

Adjectives	Literal S.-ne	Meaning	Figurative Sense	Meaning
Beau	une sœur belle	a beautiful sister	une belle soeur	a sister in law
Bon	un homme bon	a kind man	un bonhomme	a simpleton
Brave	un homme brave	a brave man	un brave homme	an honest man
Certain	un garçon brave	a brave boy	un brave garçon	a good fellow
Cher	une perle certaine	a sure loss	une certaine perte	a particular loss
Commun	un livre cher	an expensive book	mon cher livre	my dear old book
	une voix commune	an ordinary voice	d'une commune voix	unanimously
Dernier	l'année dernière	last year	la dernière année	the last year (of a period)
	un soldat fameux	a celebrated soldier	un fameux soldat	an excellent soldier
Fameux	il a l'air faux	he looks deceitful	il a un faux air de	he resembles slightly.
	un jour faux	[painting] mistaken light	faux jour	unfavorable light
	porte fausse	sham door	fausse porte	secret door
	un imbécile fier	a silly and proud man	un fier imbécile	a thoroughly silly fellow
Fier	un négociant très fort	a very stout merchant	un fort négociant	a big dealer
	une place forte	a fortified city	une forte place	an important business center
Fort	un goujat franc	a blackguard who is sincere	un franc goujat	a regular blackguard
	un homme galant	a ladies' man	un galant homme	a gentleman
	un homme gentil	a nice fellow	un gentilhomme	a nobleman
	un homme grand	a tall man	un grand homme	a great man
Franc	une mer haute	a high sea	la haute mer	in the offing (at sea)
	gens honnêtes	polite people	honnêtes gens	honorable people
Haut				
Honnête*				* Honnête is somewhat an exception to our rule. It is very seldom used with the meaning of "polite."

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

ADJECTIVES WITH A DOUBLE MEANING

Adjectives	Literal Sense	Meaning	Figurative Sense	Meaning
Maigre	repas maigre	meal without meat	maigre repas	a poor meal
Mauvais	air mauvais	vicious look	mauvais air	vulgar appearance
Méchant	des vers méchants	ill-natured poem	de mauvais vers	a poor poem
Même	la douceur même	sweetness itself	la même douceur	the same sweetness
Mortel	la vie mortelle	the mortal life	deux mortelles journées	two very tedious days
Mûr	une pomme mûre	a ripe apple	intre délibération	mature resolution
Nouveau	un livre nouveau	a new book	un nouveau livre	{ another book one more book
Pauvre	un musicien pauvre	a penniless musician	un pauvre musicien	a musician without talents
Plaisant	un homme plaisant	a pleasing man	un plaisir animal	a contemptible churl
Profond	un fossé profond	a deep ditch	un profond respect	a deep respect
Propre	une serviette propre	a clean napkin	ma propre serviette	my own napkin
Pur	du vin pur	pure wine	pure vanité	mere vanity
Sage	C'est une femme sage	she is a wise woman	C'est une sage-femme	she is a mid-wife
Seul	une femme seule	an unaccompanied woman	une seule femme	only one woman
Simple	un soldat simple	a simple minded soldier	un simple soldat	a private
Tendre	viande tendre	tender meat	tendre amitié	sweet friendship
Triste	un poète triste	a lachrymose poet	un triste poète	an indifferent poet
Unique	un tableau unique	an incomparable picture	un unique tableau	a single picture
Vrai	histoire vraie	true story	une vraie histoire	a false tale, a yarn without foundation

PART VII.

A FEW PRACTICAL ADVICES

ABOUT FRENCH VERBS

I.—Many students render without distinction the English past tense by the French *imparfait*. This is a GROSS MISTAKE.

The usual meaning of the *imparfait*—*Je donnais*, for instance—is:

I was [giving] or I used [to give]

II.—Translate, as a rule, the English past by the French *passé indéfini*

I ate

J'ai mangé

III.—DO NOT LOAD YOUR MEMORY with such "ornamental" tenses as the *passé antérieur*, the second form of the conditional anterior [*J'eus donné, j'eusse donné*] and even the *plus que parfait du subjonctif* [*que j'eusse donné*].

You will have, indeed, very little use for the latter; as for the two other ones, a foreigner can do without them altogether.

[Compare to the future of the subjunctive in Spanish.]

IV.—When you first study verbs, you MAY OMIT the *présent* [or *passé défini*] which nowadays is little used in conversation. It is, in fact, a narrative tense which you will anyway learn progressively by reading French. Of course you should, later on, make a special study of it, when you are far advanced enough to tell long stories or write at length on a given topic. To study it too soon would be likely to lead you to a misuse of this tense.

It has been the mistake of many a teacher to ignore this ancient and very truthful French saying: *Qui trop embrasse, mal étreint!*

V.—DO NOT indulge in the very wrong habit of using *LAISSER* when you translate such expressions as

let us go.

let him eat.

let them enter.

They belong to the French *imperatif*

allons!

qu'il mange!

qu'ils entrent.

VI.—Another very common mistake, for which some old-fashioned grammars are answerable, is to translate without distinction *may* by the *subjonctif présent* and *might* by the *imparfait du subjonctif*.

The rules governing the French subjonctive are entirely different from those regulating the use of "may" and "might." The latter are, in fact, often rendered in French by *pouvoir*

I think that he may not arrive in time.
Je pense qu'il peut ne pas arriver à temps.

But in:

Je tremble que vous n'arriviez pas à temps.
I tremble lest you may not arrive in time.

the subjonctive is used, not because of "may," but because verbs of fear, in French, govern this mood.

VII.—Remember that *être* is NEVER used in French as an auxiliary with the present participle, like in English.

Therefore, do not say

Je suis lisant for I am reading, but Je lis.
J'étais lisant for I was reading, but Je lisais.

This also is a very common error.

VIII.—Do not try to introduce the *imparfait du subjonctif* in your sentences if there is any other construction available. It is an awkward and ill-sounding tense which French speaking people always do their best to avoid. Indeed, some classical writers, Voltaire for instance, preferred to err grammatically than to mar their works with such disagreeable expressions as *mangeassions*, *appartinsiez*, *agenouilliassent*, and *persifflassiez!** *

IX.—It must be borne in mind that, as a rule, French VERBS OF MOTION require the auxiliary *ETRE* (and not *avoir*).

Therefore

Do not say

J'ai allé
J'ai sorti
J'ai parti
J'ai monté
J'ai descendu
J'avais tombé
J'avais venu
J'avais revenu
J'aurais devenu
J'aurais entré
Il a né
Il a mort

But say

Je suis allé
Je suis sorti
Je suis parti
Je suis monté
Je suis descendu
J'étais tombé
J'étais venu
J'étais revenu
Je serais devenu
Je serais entré
Il est né
Il est mort

* In many instances the subjonctive [present or imperfect] can be avoided. For instance, to use it in translating sentences like this:

I do not think I shall go home.
Did you believe you were sick?

would be a useless complication.

Say: Je ne pense pas aller à la maison.
Croyez vous être malade?

Both verbs have the same subject.

A great many students, however advanced they may be in French, make this mistake, the most common in French verbs and the easiest, perhaps, to avoid. This must be partly imputed to the lack of clearness of most grammars on that subject.

Remark.—There are exceptions to the above rule (for instance, *courir*, to run), but they apply to verbs of motion which are not so extensively used as those requiring the auxiliary *être*.

PART VIII.

SUNDRY DIFFICULTIES

I.—Campagne

- (a) In time of war, the army is **en campagne**, and not **à la campagne** [in the country for an outing].
- (b) In the Summer you live **à la campagne**, and not **dans la campagne** [in the fields].
- (c) Do not mistake **compagnie** [companion] for **campagne**.

II.—Croire.

- (a) **Vous croyez quelqu'un**, but **Vous croyez à une nouvelle** [without preposition: full belief; with **à**: simple adhesion].
- (b) **Vous croyez en Dieu** [with **en**: absolute confidence].

III.—Convenir

- (a) The price suits your father. **Le prix convient à votre père.**
- (b) *But*: you agree to meet in the park. **Vous convenez de vous rencontrer au parc.**

IV.—Fort, bien, beaucoup

It is a mistake to think that these three words can be used indifferently.

- (a) **Bien** is without question stronger than **beaucoup**.
Je le désire BEAUCOUP. I wish it much.
Je le désire BIEN. I wish it very much.
- (b) **Fort** is sometimes stronger than **bien**.
Je le désire FORT. I do wish it.
- (c) Notice the difference between:
fort bien: very good! all right!
bien fort: very strongly.

V.—Penser

It is a common mistake to translate **to think of** into **penser de** in the meaning of **to have in one's thoughts**. Use: **penser à**.

Penser de means: to have an opinion of.

Pensez à moi: think of me.

Que pensez vous de moi: what do you think of me?

VI.—**Pas mal, pas mauvais**

These expressions are often misunderstood by foreigners. They do not mean: not so very bad [or badly], but not at all badly, not at all bad.

J'en ai pas mal means: I have quite a number of them.

VII.—**Puisque, depuis**

Few students use these words correctly. Both, it is true, can be translated by since, but there are two "since" in English.

Since I saw you, I have been sick.

DEPUIS que je vous ai vu

Since you cannot do otherwise.

PUISQUE vous ne pouvez pas

VIII.—**N'est-ce-pas**

Remember that this is the only way to translate into French such expressions as:

do you? does he? do you not? did they? and so forth; are you? were they? and so forth.

NOTICE however that you cannot use it when do, does, are, etc., have not the same subject as the verb for which they stand.

Example: I wish to go there; do you not?

Je désire y aller; et vous?

IX.—**Point, pas**

Students are often wondering what is the difference between these words.

Bear in mind that point is STRONGER than pas.

Pierre: Je ne veux PAS.

Jean: Je vous en prie

Pierre: Je ne veux POINT, vous dis-je!

X.—**Prepositions**

It has been said, with good reason, that no part of the French syntax is more difficult for a foreigner to master than the prepositions.

The rules laid out on that subject by the different grammars or handbooks are, of necessity, vague, unreliable and therefore of little value.

Against this kind of stumbling blocks we remain powerless, for a very long practice only can enable students to use the right preposition at the right place.

Here are, however, a few remarks from which you may derive some benefit.

I.—*De* is considerably more used than *à*. If you are in doubt, use *de* after nouns, adjectives and verbs; you will thus lessen the danger of making a mistake.

II.—Try to master the following list of verbs which are in constant use and require two prepositions (*à* with a noun; *de* with an infinitive).

Conseiller	à.....de.....
dire	à.....de.....
demandeur	à.....de.....
défendre	à.....de.....
ordonner	à.....de.....
persuader	à.....de.....
promettre	à.....de.....
proposer	à.....de.....
permettre	à.....de.....
rappeler	à.....de.....
refuser	à.....de.....
reprocher	à.....de.....
répondre	à.....de.....
souhaiter	à.....de.....

Rely upon practice for the rest and unless you enjoy an extraordinary memory, do not endeavor to learn by heart the lists given by grammars and handbooks, for these lists should be used only as works of reference.

XI.—*Savoir, connaître*

Two of the worst stumbling blocks of the French.

Remember that:

I.—To know that..... { are { *savoir que*.....
To know if, etc { *savoir si*, etc.....

II.—*CONNAÎTRE* is always used with a direct object, and that object cannot be a VERB.

III.—*CONNAÎTRE*, and not *savoir*, is used in the meaning of "to be acquainted with."

XII.—*Vieille, veille, vielle*

Notice the spelling of these words:

vieille—old (fem.)
veille (f)—the eve
vielle (f)—hurdy gurdy

XIII.—*Est-ce-que*

Notice that if, in the course of a conversation, you experience some difficulty about the place of pronouns or the construction in general when you use the interrogative form, you can always begin the sentence with *EST-CE-QUE*, which does not alter the primitive construction of that sentence.

Examples:

He remembers: **il se souvient.**

Does he remember: **est-ce-qu'il se souvient?**

I would have given it to him: **je le lui aurais donné.**

Would I have given it to him: **est ce que je le lui aurais donné?**

Est-ce-que does not necessarily express "astonishment"—in spite of the affirmations of some grammarians.

XIV.—En-à

Do not use indifferently **EN**, **À**, or **DANS** when you wish to translate **in** or **at** before the name of a country or that of a city.

En is used with countries: **en France.**

À is used with cities: **à Paris.**

I am in my room at London in England:

Je suis DANS ma chambre À Londres EN Angleterre.

PART IX.

MISTAKES IN LETTER WRITING

I.—Do not write *Cher monsieur* [Dear Sir] to people whom you do not know. Use *Monsieur* alone.*

II.—Do not use capitals for names of days or months in the body of a sentence; these are not proper nouns in French.

III.—Do not use ordinal but cardinal numbers for dates.
The fifteenth of January is *LE QUINZE JANVIER*.

IV.—At the end of a letter, do not translate *Yours truly* by “*votre vraiment*,” “*votre sincèrement*” or anything of the sort. Although it is very difficult for a foreigner to fathom the depths and appreciate the multifarious shades of meaning of French epistolary formulas, here are some rules which the student may safely go by.

- | | | |
|---|--------|--|
| (a) in a business letter | write: | { <i>Recevez, Monsieur, mes salutations empressées.</i> |
| (b) to high officials, (representatives, etc.) | | { <i>Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le . . . l'assurance de ma haute considération.</i> |
| (c) to some one with whom you are acquainted but not intimate | | { <i>Recevez, je vous prie, l'assurance de ma considération distinguée.</i> |
| (d) a little less formal..... | | { <i>Croyez, cher monsieur, à mes meilleurs sentiments.</i> |
| (e) a man to a woman..... | | { <i>Veuillez agréer, Madame, mes respectueux hommages.</i> |
| (f) to a friend..... | | { <i>Bien à vous.</i>
<i>Tout à vous.</i>
<i>Votre tout dévoué.</i>
<i>Sincèrement à vous.</i>
<i>Votre affectionné.</i> |

VI.—Do not translate literally, at the end of a letter, *Respectfully* or *Yours respectfully*. This expression, which is meaningless in English epistolary style, is always taken in its proper sense in French, and therefore used only from inferior to superior in business or civil service. A woman specially should be very careful to avoid it in French when writing to a man.

* The practice of addressing people, in a letter or in conversation, by their family name—“i.e.” *Monsieur* Blank or *Cher monsieur* Blank, is to be avoided, as it is somewhat vulgar in French nowadays.

Wrong expressions.

Donnez lui mes amours.

[give her my love.]

[from a woman to a woman.]

Avec mes regards.

[with kind regards.]

Rappelez moi à lui.

[remember me to him.]

Votre respectueusement

[Yours very respectfully.]

[from inferior to superior, in civil
service, etc.]

Correct expressions.

Faites lui toutes mes amitiés.

Avec mes meilleurs souvenirs.

Rappelez moi à son bon souvenir.

**Je reste avec respect votre humble
serviteur.**

PART X.

ERRONEOUS FRENCH QUOTATIONS.

A number of French words, expressions or sentences which are offered as foreign quotations and usually written in italics in English literature, are not properly spelt or correctly used. Any one addicted to the study of French should avoid, above all, this particular kind of "stumbling blocks."

The list hereafter appended contains only the most common misquotations. There are many others.

Au fond.

Right enough when taken in the meaning of "at bottom," "at the bottom," "in reality," is wrong if used for "thoroughly" which is, in French,

à fond.

Aventurier

is sometimes used with the meaning of a "venturesome character, a happy-go-lucky fellow, fond of change," etc. This is wrong, as the word is always contemptuous in French.

Blanc-mange

should be spelt

Blanc-manger
(white food)

Chef.

It is a widely spread misconception to consider this name as referring always to a cook. It is in reality the regular translation of "chief."

Chacun à son goût.

As this expression means "every one has his own taste," the word "a" is a verb and must not take the accent.

Demi-tasse

is sometimes mistaken for half a cup of coffee. It means a cup of coffee without milk.

Femme de chambre

is NOT a chambermaid but a lady's maid. "Chambermaid" is

Fille de chambre.

Gendarme.

This word is often misused by foreigners. The "Gendarme" is a rural guard, NOT a city policeman. The latter is called: in Paris: **Gardien de la Paix**.

elsewhere: **Sergent de ville** or **Agent de police**.

Négligée

[morning dress] should not be spelt with two "e." The French word is

négligé.
"She is in négligé."

Papier mache	should be spelt papier mäché for the last word is the past participle of the verb mächer [to chew].
Pell-mell	when dressed up in italics as a French idiom is not spelt correctly. The French expression is: pèle-mêle.
Réchauffé	[old material worked up again]. Should be spelt with one "e." The French word is réchauffé.
Sans culotte	"It is a réchauffé of an old book."
Sacre!	is NOT a "ragged fellow," as a well known dictionary puts it, but a patriot who during the French Revolution had discarded the breeches (<i>culottes</i>), an aristocratic garb, for the plain trousers.
Sacrebleu!	an exclamation commonly attributed to French characters by some comic papers, is NOT CORRECT. It means "coronation." The correct expression in French is Sacrebleu! derived from Sacré Dieu [by the sacred God].
Naïve.	Right enough when you speak of a woman, is not correct when referring to a man. In that case write or say: naiſſ [na-if]
A revoir!	used for "good bye!" is not correct, for, to a Frenchman, it means: "to be revised." Write or say: au revoir
En suite.	This expression is correct when used in the meaning of "following each other." For instance: "I rented three rooms en suite. " although se faisant suite is more generally employed in order to avoid a confusion with the adverb ENSUITE (afterwards). But en suite is WRONG when used with the meaning of "as a complement," "as an accompaniment." In the following paragraph, culled from the Fashion Notes of a leading New York daily: "also Siberian squirrel with stole-fronted collarette and huge Directoire muff en suite, " the quotation is faulty.

Fleur de lis.

The last word in this quotation is usually pronounced "li" (in English "lee"). This is a mistake, for the final "s" must be sounded.

However, in heraldry, this "s" is mute. Therefore the following rhymes are correct in a poem on a crest:

"He chose the Fleur de lis.
All men shall see
My Fleur de lis
To think of me."

Klio Club, Chicago, 1902.

Mayonnaise

must not be pronounced

may-onnaise, but
ma-i-onnaise

[English: mah-ee-onnaise.]

Encore.

It is absolutely incorrect, at the French point of view, to say:

The singer had many "encores."
The proper word is: rappel or: bis.

A Frenchman would say:
Tel morceau a été bissé plusieurs fois.

Double entendre

is not correct. The correct expression is:

à double entente
[entente is meaning; entendre, to hear.]

de gaité du cœur.

This expression has been used by several writers, for instance by Mrs. Oliphant in her "Life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan." Say: de gaité de cœur.

à l'outrance.

[to the utmost].

Say: à outrance.

soubriquet

is not French. If the good old English word "nickname," which means the same thing, does not suit you, and if you wish to use what Professor Hill calls "borrowed finery," Say: sobriquet.

vis à vis.

A much more useful loan from the French, is correct only if it is pronounced: vi-za-vi.

[English: vee-zah-vee]

PART XI.**A FEW HINTS****TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING FRENCH**

I.—Bear in mind that the greatest obstacle in that matter lies in the habit of French speaking people to carry over or "link" the final consonant of words. This practice makes it difficult for the novice to catch the words independently from one another.*

In consequence, we advise the student to get thoroughly familiar himself with the linking of final consonants by "drilling" carefully and patiently.

II.—Notice the difference of meaning resulting from a different accentuation of the same word. (See Appendix on Pronunciation, III. Miscellaneous.)

III.—You will avoid some misinterpretations by mastering the following list, containing nouns which sound alike although their spelling may differ.

* To the untrained ear a sentence like this : les ennemis arrivent en un instant, seems to be a single long word ; moreover, the carrying over of the "t" of arrivent is misleading, for it gives a sound to a third person plural which would be silent otherwise.

A FEW HINTS TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING FRENCH

a, has [he]	à, to, at bale, bay [color]	bale, ballet, ballerina bas, low bois [je] drinks [I]	baie, light [win-dow] bat, pack-saddle	bat [il] beats [he]
balai, broom has, stocking bois, wood	ballet, ballerina bas, low bois [je] drinks [I]	quart, quart chant, song chair, flesh cité, quoted coin, quince	chaise, pulpit	
car, for champ, field cher, dear cité, city coin, corner	quart, quart chant, song chair, flesh cité, quoted coin, quince	col, pass compte, account coque, shell coup, stroke court, short	collé, mucilage comte, count coup, cost courre, hunt	cours, course, class
conte, tale coq, rooster cou, neck cour, court	compte, account coque, shell coup, stroke court, short	cousin, gnat crâne, skull encre, ink faim, hunger	coût, cost courre, hunt	
cousin, cousin crâne, skull encre, ink faim, hunger	cousin, gnat crâne, plucky ancre, anchor fin, end	fait [il] makes [he]	fin, fine fée, fairy	
fait, fact flan, cheesecake fond, bottom	flanc, flank fonds, fund		fonds, font [relig.]	font [ils] make [they]
frais [le] fresh fumée, smoke	air frais [les] expenses fumet, flavour,		frail, spawn	
gage [le], pledge gale, itch	scent			
gaz, gas	gages [les] wages Galles, Wales			
gelée, frost	gaze, gauze gelée, jelly		gelt, frozen	

gens [ʒɛ̃s] people	Jean, John	gent [ʒɑ̃t] tribe; j'en [ɛ̃], I have folk [põt] some
glace, ice	glace, looking-glass	
hôtel, hotel	auteil, altar	
joue, cheek	joue [jø], play [l] joug, yoke	
lis, lily	lice, lists [to en-lis̃s], smooth-ter the]	
long, long	l'on, one, they	
louer, to praise	louer, to let	
lune, moon	l'unes, the one	
mer, sea	mère, mother	
mine, mine	mine, mien, look	
mon, my	mont, mount	
mot, word	mauz, evils	
mur, wall	mûre, mulberry	
ne, not	nœud, knot	
né, born	nez, nose	
neuf, nine	neuf, new	
ni, neither	nid, nest	
ou, or	oh, where	
outre, besides	outre, leather	
pain, bread	bottle	
pan, tail [of coat]	pin, pine	
pas, not	pan, Pan [myth]	
par, by	pas, step	
parti [pɛ̃ti], party	part, part [a]	
peau, skin	partie, part	
penser, to think	pot, pot	
père, father	panser, to groom	
plaine, plain, field	paire, pair	
	pleine, full [fɛ̃n.]	
		paon, peacock
		pare [ʃe] ward off [l]
		pair, par

SOME STUMBLING BLOCKS

A FEW HINTS TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING FRENCH

plat, flat	plat, dish	plu, pleased	
plus, more	plu, rained	poir, pitch	
poi, pea	poids, weigh	poing, fist	
point, not	point, point	pore, pore	
port, port	port, postage	prt, ready	
por, louse	poul, pulse	rate, skate [fish]	
pré, meadow	prbs, near	sein, breast	seing, signature <i>ceint</i> , girded [leg.]
prix, price	pris, taken		
rat, rat	ras, close, flat		
ré, D [music]	raie, stripe		
riz, rice	ri, laughed		
roue, wheel	roux, reddish		
sain, wholesome	saint, saint		
sale, dirty	salle, hall	cent, hundred	
sang, blood	sans, without	seau, seal	
saut, jump	soi, silly	Cène, Lord's Sup-	
scène, scene	saine, wholesome	per	
scie, saw	(fem.)	si, so	
scieur, sawer	si, if		
se, oneself	sieur, sir		
sens, sense	ce, this		
siege, seat	ceux, those		
signe, sign	ceaus, census		
sire, sire	siege, siege		
soi, oneself	cyrne, swan		
son, his	cire, wax		
suite [tak], follow-	soie, silk	soit [qu'il], let it be	sont [ils], are
ing	son, sound	son, bran	[they]
			sequences

sur, upon tale, pillow case	star, sure taie, speck [eye]	star, sour thé, tea	tais [je me], I keep silent
tare, tare taur, rate teint, complexion temps, time tent, tent tien, thine tort, wrong tou, cough tribu, tribe trot, trot veau, veal	tard, late tat, early tain, tinfoil tant, so much tante, aunt tensions [je], hold [I] tors, twisted tout, all tribut, tribute trop, too much vos, your	taon, gad fly taon, gad fly	vair, a kind of fur
vaine, vein vent, wind ver, worm	vain, vain [fern.] van, winnowing basket vers, verse	vert, green verre, glass	vert, green verre, glass
vin, wine vu, seen	vain, vain (m) vue, sight	vingt, twenty	vingt, twenty

PART XII.

A LIST

OF VERY FAMILIAR EXPRESSIONS OR WORDS

Commonly Used by the French in Conversation or Current Literature.

THIS list is quite an innovation in an educational work.

Let it be understood from the first that it is not a short dictionary of slang, although it contains a few expressions which are undoubtedly "poor French." All the words hereafter classified are constantly used in familiar style or conversation; many of them indeed are not disowned by French Academiciens; but few have gained admission to the standard dictionaries, and this is why we have grouped them together as methodically as possible.

The following is chiefly a REFERENCE LIST, although the student might occasionally make use himself of these "familiar expressions." The words which are not strictly *bon ton* will be found marked with a †

QUALIFYING MAN

un âne bâté [a saddled ass]	a regular ass
une culotte de peau [buckskin breeches]	a stultified old warrior
un débrouillard	a handy fellow
un drôle de corps* [funny body]	a queer fellow
un dur à cuire [hard to cook]	a hardy one
un foudre de guerre	a mighty warrior
une ganache	a dotard
un gabelou	custom house officer
un gniaf	cobbler
un gogo	a "credulous flat"
un iroquois	a "rum one"
un jobard	a "flat"
un larbin	a flunkey
un loup de mer [sea-wolf]	Jack Tar
un loup garou [were wolf]	a "bear"

* Also un drôle de paroissien [lit: a funny parishioner.]

un maître homme	a clever man
une maritorne	a wench
un miriflore, [muscadin]	a regular fop
un Mr. Chose	Mr. What's his name
un paltoquet	a clumsy lout
un pioupiou	foot soldier "boy in blue" "red coat" [England]
un pipelet	janitor
un petit maître	a fop, a snob
un pleurard	one who is always crying
un pleutre	a contemptible man
un pochard	a drunkard
un pion [man (at draughts)]	usher [in a school]
un rabat-joie [joy killer]	a "wet blanket"
un raseur [raser: to shave]†	a bore
un rat de cave [cellar rat]	excise man
un rat d'église [church rat]	church beggar
un rat d'opéra [opera-rat]†	ballet girl
un raté [a miss]†	a "dead failure"
un rond de cuir [a rubber-seat cushion]	a sedentary man
un roublard	a shrewd one
un sagouin	a slovenly fellow
un salaud	a dirty fellow
un saligaud	a nasty individual
une sangsue [leech]	a "blood sucker"
une sainte-n'y-touche	a smooth hypocrite
un triste sire	a wicked man
un vert galant	a ladies' man
une vieille potiche [old Chinese vase]	old "stick in the mud"
un voyou	a cad

VERBS

Avoir une dent contre	to have a grudge against
Avoir la langue bien pendue [a tongue which hangs well]	to be a slanderer
Avoir son pompon [a top knot]†	to be "very gay"
Blaguer	to tell fibs
Bouffer [to puff, to swell]†	to eat
Bûcher	to study hard

Chipoter [se]	to dally, to haggle
Embêter†	to bore some one to death
Envoyer promener	to send some one "to the shades"
Faire la barbe à [to shave]	to bore some one
Faire une boulette [a pellet]	to blunder
Faire une brioche [a bun]†	to make a mistake
Faire de l'épate, de l'esbrouffe†	to "bluff"
Faire un four	to make a blunder, to be a "dead failure"
Faire une gaffe [a boat hook]	to make a blunder
Faire son deuil de [to get in mourning for]	to give up as hopeless
Faire la noce [wedding feast]†	to have a "jolly time"
Faire un pied de nez à [to make a nose one foot long]	to snub some one
Filer	to skip
Financer†	to pay, to "cough up"
Finir mal [to end badly]	to come to a bad end
Fourrer†	to place, to put, to "jam"
Gueuler [from Gueule, jaw]†	to brawl, to "jaw"
Laver la tête à [to wash somebody's head]	to give a lecture to
Mettre dedans	to "take in," to "do" some one
Potasser	to study hard
Rebiffer [se]†	to be refractory, to "kick"
Trimbaler	to drag about
Trimer	to drudge
Turlupiner	to ridicule

ADJECTIVES.

Détraqué	"cracked"
Fichu	very poor [fig.] "done for"
Flou*	soft
Mirobolant	stunning, "first rate"
Puant [stinking]†	conceited
Rigolo†	very funny
Salé [salted]	{ very expensive c'est salé: That is salting it on!
Toqué [Toque: a cap]	"cranky," "crazy"
Veule	"soft," shifty [a man]

* This word is getting more and more used every year, specially in Paris.

NOUNS.

Bachot	Abrev. for Baccalauréat [a bachelor degree]
Bagou	the gift of the gab
Barbe [à sa barbe]	to his face
Blague [tobacco-pouch]	fib
Bosse [du dessin, de la musique]	the gift [of drawing, etc.]
Canard [a duck]	bogus news
Claque [a slap]	troop of hired applauders
Clou [a nail]	a "hit"
Conte à dormir debout	idle tale
Croûte [a crust]	rubbish; [picture]: "daub"
Cuir [leather]	vulgar mispronunciation
Dada [horse]	hobby
la Haute or la Haute Pègre	the "swell mob"
Galette [a sort of butter cake]†	money, "dough"
Langue verte [the green tongue]	a name for slang
Machine	very commonly used in French: "Cette machine-là," That thing a "fix" "Etre dans la panade," To be in a "fix"
Panade [bread soup]	blot of ink
Pâté [pie]	of things: out of order; of man: "shaky"
Patraque	the gift of the gab
Platine [plate]	"tin"
Quibus [du]	old family umbrella
Riflard	"Il a le sac"
Sac [bag]†	He is a money bag
Saint-frusquin	the whole outfit, the whole kit, "one's brass"
Sapin [pine wood]†	a cab
Scie [une] [saw]	of things: a bore
Toutou	little dog
Truc	a trick
Veste [waistcoat]	a failure
Vieux jeu	old fashioned idea, "C'est vieux jeu"

SUNDRIES.

Boire du lait [to drink milk]	to be "in clover"
Cela ne passe pas!	It is "no go"

C'est dernier cri [last cry]*	It's entirely new, the last thing!
C'est du propre! [clean]	That's nice! [sarcasm]
C'est épantant†	It's stunning!
Etre à sec [dry]	to be hard up
Il n'a que la peau sur les os	He is only skin and bones
Il a une araignée dans le plafond [a spider in his ceiling]	He has a bee in his bonnet
Il a mis du foin dans ses bottes [He put hay in his shoes]	He feathered his nest
Jeter sa langue aux chiens [to throw one's tongue to the dogs]	to give up guessing
Manger de la vache enragée [to feast on mad cow]	to have hard times
Attrape!	Catch that!—Good for you, for him!
Allez y voir! [go and see it]	Believe it if you can!—Get it if you can!
Faire le pied de grue [to stand on one foot like a crane]	to wait patiently
Descends de ton cheval!	Come down from your pedestal— Don't "bluff" any more!
Que oui!	Yes, to be sure!
Vous n'êtes guère dégourdi [you are hardly thawed out]	You do not know much how to manage
Quatre pelés et un tondu [four bald ones and a shorn one]	a very poor audience, a half empty house [at the theatre]
Comptez-y et buvez de l'eau claire! [rely upon it and drink pure water]	You are a fool if you rely upon it
Il se gobe [he swallows himself]	He has a "big head"
Une famille huppée [a crested family]	A "crack," a "swell" family
Un vieux de la vieille [a veteran from the Old Guard]	An old "dog of war"

* This expression is a great favorite at present in Paris.

PART XIII.

ABOUT SOME ENGLISH AND FRENCH AFFIXES, ETC.

STUDENTS are often embarrassed in trying to translate into French the English nouns* ending in *full*, *less*, *load* and so forth.

On the other hand, some endings, in French, indicate plainly by themselves that the words to which they belong are terms of disparagement or even of contempt. Some others, which are merely affixes, modify the quality expressed by the original word.

Here are some rules or remarks which we should wish to impress on the learner's mind.

I.—ENGLISH AFFIXES

1. *less*

Is very often rendered by the preposition *sans* followed by the noun.

Example: He was coatless, hatless and penniless. [Il était sans habit, sans chapeau et sans le sou.]

2. *load*

See No. 3 (affix *full*).

3. *full*

Is generally rendered by the French affix *é* added to the primitive. Sometimes, for euphony or otherwise, the spelling of the latter is more or less changed in the derivative.

(a) Primitive not altered

une aire [barn-floor]	airée [barn-floor full of sheaves]
une aiguille [needle]	aiguillée [needleful]
une assiette [plate]	assiettée [plateful]
une auge [trough]	augée [troughful]
la bouche [mouth]	bouchée [mouthful (solids)]
la brouette [wheelbarrow]	brouettée [wheelbarrow load]
la chambre [room]	chambrée [roomful (milit.)]
la charrette [cart]	charrettée [cartload]
la cuve [vat]	cuvée [vatful]

* We are speaking of nouns, not of adjectives.

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- also *bellâtre*, a foppish fellow
douceâtre, sweetish
gentillâtre, a would-be gentleman
marâtre, a cruel mother or stepmother

2. *asse*

Often conveys an idea of thickness for things, of dullness for persons.

- Examples: *bon* [good] *bonasse* [simple, silly]
soupe [soup] *soupasse* [thick soup]
millet [millet] *millasse* (pudding made of millet)
ville [town] *villasse* [an outgrown village]

3. *ette*

Is used for diminutive.

- Examples: *amour* [love] *amourette* [little love affair]
biche [hind] *bichette* [little hind—term of endearment]
broche [spit] *brochette* [skewer]
boule [ball] *boulette* [pellet]
chemise *chemisette*
col [collar] *collerette*
couche [bed] *couchette* [cot]
courbe [curve] *courtette* [cringing]
cuve [vat] *cuvette* [handbasin]
gras [fat] *grassouillette* [plump]
hache [axe] *hachette* [hatchet]
histoire [story] *historiette* [little story]
montagne [mountain] *montagnette* [hill]
poule [hen] *poulette* [pet hen]
Jeanne *Jeannette*
Marie *Mariette*
Paule *Paulette*
etc.

4. *rogne*

This ending, which seems quite unmusical to a French ear, is not frequent; but in every instance it belongs to a word which expresses something repulsive.

Examples

- ivrogne*, a drunkard
trogne the face of a drunkard
charogne a carrion

As for *rogne* itself, it means a kind of skin disease!

5. **ment**

This affix is the characteristic of adverbs and corresponds to the English affix **ly**. Remember that, in French, adverbs are usually formed from adjectives by adding **MENT** to the feminine form of the latter.

grand
doux

grande
douce

grandement
doucement

6. Prefix **re**

Notice that the idea expressed in English by "back" or "again" is rendered by the prefix **RE** in French.

to come back, revenir
to do again refaire

PART XIV.

ABOUT SOME POPULAR TYPES OR CHARACTERS COMMONLY ALLUDED TO IN FRENCH LITERATURE OR CONVERSATION.

IN French, more, perhaps, than in any other tongue, frequent references are made to sundry characters of the masterpieces of the national literature, which have become, so to speak, regular adjectives. Some of these, it is true, have acquired a world-wide fame; but most of them do not convey any meaning to the mind of foreigners.

That is why we have assimilated them to the other "stumbling blocks" of the language.

Gargantua

An immortal creation in the masterpiece of Rabelais bearing this title.

A popular name to designate a man endowed with an insatiable appetite.

Cet enfant est un vrai Gargantua.

Les moutons de Panurge

This expression depicts people who hurry to do a thing just for imitation's sake and without any good reason. It is an allusion to Panurge's sheep in Rabelais's *Pantagruel*.

Raminagrobis

A name given to a cat by La Fontaine in one of his fables. Very often applied since, in a bantering way, to this animal.

Origin: a character in Rabelais's *Gargantua*.

Dulcinée

"Dulcinée," in French, is generally applied, as a term of contempt, to the lady love of some inexperienced youth.

Origin: Dulcinée, from Toboso, in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*.*

Scapin

A prominent character in *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, by Molière.

It is the type of the impudent and crafty "valet."

Tartufe

Another character in one of Molière's comedies (*Le Tartufe*). Will remain forever in French the impersonation of hypocrisy.

* This is, as the reader can see, borrowed from the Spanish literature.

Harpagon

The leading character in *L'Avare*, a comedy by Molière. Is the classical type of the miser.

Ce vieil Harpagon [this old miser.]

Also from a comedy by Molière. Is given, as a nickname, to a man who has married above his condition, and is obliged to endure with patience his wife's whims and extravagance.

L'avocat Patelin

A very amusing comedy by Palaprat [1706.] The leading character, a rather disreputable barrister, is to-day the type of the unscrupulous and soft-tongued lawyer.

Quasimodo

This character of Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* gave birth to the popular expression:

Laid comme Quasimodo
[as ugly as Quasimodo]**Perrette**

The impersonation of the dreamer, who builds castles in the air.

Origin: the milkwoman in La Fontaine's *Perrette et le Pot au lait*.

Père Goriot

A character in one of Balzac's best works. Impersonates a weak father, ill-treated by his children.

Roger Bontemps

[Roger Good-Time.] Béranger, the great French song writer, made this character very popular by his famous lines:

Vivre obscur à sa guise,
Narguer les mécontents
Eh gai! c'est la devise
Du gros Roger Bontemps.

Mimi Pinson

A "bon vivant," enamored of life, and happy in spite of all.

"Pinson," a chaffinch.

"Gai comme pinson" corresponds to the English "lively as a lark."

Mimi Pinson, the graceful and immensely popular creation of Alfred de Musset, is a female Roger Bontemps. Often applied to impecunious shop-girls or seamstresses who face bad luck with cheerfulness and courage.

Le marquis de Carabas

A character of Perrault's *Chat Botté* (Puss in the boots), who became rich, thanks to the craft and the audacity of his pet cat.

Applied to a "nouveau riche," who has been more lucky than industrious.

Robert Macaire

A creation of the famous playwright, Frédéric Lemaitre. The type of the modern "sharp."

Tartarin

The hero of a series of Alphonse Daudet's novels. Such was the success of this work that "Tartarin" became very quickly in France the impersonation of the Southern man; boastful and noisy, but, at bottom, as guileless as a child.

Joseph Prud'homme

A creation of Henri Monnier, a very witty French writer. Mr. Prud'homme personifies the "bourgeois," ponderous, solemn and silly. Many of his utterances are classical, so to speak, in French literature. For instance:

Ce sabre est le plus beau jour de ma vie
[this sword is the happiest day of my life].

Le char de l'Etat navigue sur un volcan.
[the chariot of the State navigates upon a volcano].

French cartoonists often bring Mr. Prud'homme into play.

Jacques Bonhomme

Characterizes the whole French people, and corresponds to the English John Bull and to the American Uncle Sam.

Usually represented as a good-natured countryman, held in bondage in old times by the "seigneurs," and nowadays by the red tape and the "circumlocution offices" of the omnipotent French Administration.

A French historian, who died in 1865. Has remained the type of a silly old man, always afraid of improprieties.

is the French Tommy Atkins.

[A new creation] Is among the officers what Dumanet is in the rank and file.

Origin: *ramolli* [a "soft one."]

The usual nickname of the gendarme (French constabulary). Has its origin in a witty song which brings into play a corporal of constables and a private, named Pandore, the latter blindly acquiescing in everything his superior officer chances to say.

From *câlin* [wheedling, lazy]; a type of soft-minded weakly man; something like "Pat" of the American comic papers.

Always represented in the garb of a city dweller.

Pandore**Calino**

Marlborough

The French, seemingly to get even with the English General Marlborough, who had defeated them often at the beginning of the eighteenth century, made him the hero of a burlesque ballad. His name, wrongly pronounced *mal-brou*, became extremely popular with many generations of Frenchmen; and "*Marlborough s'en va-t-en guerre*" is still a song dear to the school-children of France. Curiously enough, the tune adapted to the words is that of the English song, "For he is a jolly good fellow."

Les quatre-z'officiers de Marlborough—an expression sometimes used to designate busy bodies, who talk much and do nothing.

Mr. de la Palice

A famous French general, killed at Pavia in 1525. Like Marlborough, he became popular through a burlesque song. There is no child in France who did not dance or sing the ronde "*Mr. de la Palice est mort.*"

Although Marshal de la Palice was by no means a silly man, the legend attributes to him a great many speeches and remarks ridiculously commonplace. Hence the expression, *Vérité de la Palice*, to designate an emphatic and lengthy exposition of a self-evident fact.

Le roi Dagobert

Like the two warriors above mentioned, King Dagobert, one of the ablest rulers France ever had, was unfortunate enough to be ridiculed in a ballad, together with his State Minister, Saint Eloi. To the French, this king is certainly better known as *le roi qui met sa culotte à l'envers* [the king who puts on his breeches wrong side out] than as the greatest legislator of the seventh century.

C'est comme le roi Dagobert is an expression not unfrequently used when speaking of a man who finds himself, by his own fault, "in a nice mess."

La mère Michel

A very familiar figure in children's books. Represents an elderly widow who worships an unmanageable cat. This appellation is, of course, often bestowed upon old maids, in popular literature.

La Fée Carabosse

One of the ugliest characters in the French fairy tales. A term of contempt to qualify an old gossip, a mischief-maker.

Cartouche and Mandrin

Two famous French banditti in the eighteenth century. Their names are frequently given to bold highwaymen.

Colombine

Originally a character in the old Italian comedy; now one of the characters of the country fair theatre in France. A kind of "soubrette."

Jocrisse

Originally a character in the street shows of old France. Now a sort of "soft," a "green youth" (country shows).

Pierrot

An ordinary character of the French pantomime, always clad in white, with the face sprinkled over with flour.

Arlequin

Like Colombine, belonged at first to the old Italian comedy. A common disguise at fancy dress balls, and an ubiquitous figure in the streets on Mardi Gras. His dress is made up of numberless pieces of cloth of all colors: hence the name of Arlequin, given in French to a man who in politics has no conviction of his own, a "regular weather cock."

Paillasse

Same origin as Arlequin and Colombine. A sort of clown who is used outside of the show to attract the attention of passers by and draw them in. This name is also a term of contempt applied to low politicians.

Polichinelle

Same origin as above. Used in Italy to represent the Neapolitan citizen, vulgar, but witty and sarcastic. In France he degenerated into a humpbacked and gaily attired character of the popular "farces," personifying the Gallic wit and humor. Of late, he has lost much of his old importance. He is hardly found now elsewhere than in the Punch and Judy show (in French: Guignol).

Auguste [alias Gugus]

A nickname commonly given of late to the circus clowns.

Smalah

In Arabian, the private convoy or train of a chief. The capture of Abd-El-Kader's Smalah by the Duc d'Aumale in 1842 has popularized this word in France, where it is used to-day to designate a retinue of servants, or a family with many children, etc.

Les naufragés de la Méduse The wreck of the ship *La Méduse*, in July, 1816, is justly considered in France as the most terrible tragedy of the sea. The hideous scenes which took place on the famous raft made up of the "débris" of the *Méduse*, are frequently alluded to in literature, and the disaster itself employed metaphorically in many ways.

La marquise de Pretintaille A type created by Beranger to represent the prejudices of the old nobility in France.

Landerneau A city in Brittany, which enjoys the privilege of being made fun of by comic papers and playwrights.

Carpentras Same explanation. These cities, (and sometimes *Brives-la-Gaillarde*), are the "Oshkoshes and Kalamazos" of France.

APPENDIX

STUMBLING BLOCKS IN FRENCH PRONUNCIATION

THIS is not, by any means, a treatise on pronunciation.

Our only aim here is to warn students against some serious mistakes very often made by foreigners in reading or speaking French.

DIFFICULTY NO. 1

The letter S.

It is a common mistake for English speaking people to make no difference between "s" and "ss" in the body of a French word. This usually leads to ridiculous, sometimes to painful misunderstandings. For instance:

Donnez moi un plat de poisson
[Give me a dish of fish]

will puzzle somewhat a French waiter if you give to "ss" the sound of a soft "s," and pronounce the last word po-ah-zon [poison].

Again in:

Il est couché sur un coussin
[He is reclining upon a cushion]

you must be careful to pronounce the last word couss-in, and not cou-zin, which would make you say:

"He is reclining upon a cousin."

and so forth.

Remark.—Notice the difference between

frison [curl]	and frisson [shiver]
rose [rose]	rosse [old nag]
embraser [to set on fire]	embrasser [to embrace]
poison [poison]	poisson [fish]
case [case]	casse [breakage]
Lise [Lise, a first name]	lisso [smooth]
cousin [cousin]	coussin [cushion]
ruse [ruse]	russe [Russian]
base [base]	basse [low-(feminine)]
baiser [to kiss]	baisser [to lower]
d'osier [made of willow]	dossier [back of a chair]
ils ont [they have]	ils sont [they are]

DIFFICULTY NO. 2

Numbers: *cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf, dix.*

RULE.—I. At the end of a sentence [or before a vowel] PRONOUNCE the last letter.

II. In the body of a sentence, before a consonant the last letter is SILENT.

Examples:

I. *J'ai rencontré cinq élèves [cink]; ils sont cinq [cink].*

II. *J'ai rencontré cinq voitures [cin].*

EXCEPTION: *dix sept, dix huit, dix neuf.*
[diz-set, diz-huit, diz-neuf]

DIFFICULTY NO. 3]

et, est.

RULE.—The “t” is always silent in *et* [and], as a contrast to *est* [is].

Examples:

L'homme spirituel est agréable en société.

Cet homme passe pour spirituel et agréable.

DIFFICULTY NO. 4

plus.

RULE.—At the end of a sentence:

“*s*” is SILENT if *plus* means: **no more.**

“*s*” is PRONOUNCED if *plus* means: **more.**

Examples:

*Vous voulez des cigares? Je n'en ai plus [plu]
Je n'ai qu'un cigare: donnez m'en plus [pluss]*

DIFFICULTY NO. 5.

tous, tout.

RULE.—At the end of a sentence, the “*t*” of *tout* is SILENT as a contrast to *tous*, the “*s*” of which is PRONOUNCED.

Example:

*Je les ai tous; c'est tout.
[touss] [tou]*

DIFFICULTY NO. 6

The ending **ient**.

Few endings in French are more misused than this particular one. Students will avoid many mistakes by keeping in mind that "ent" is SILENT in verbs, as ending of the third person plural.

Examples:

Ils portent [por-te]

Ils copient [co-pi]

Ils avaient [a-vé]

Otherwise, give "ient"

1st. The French sound I-IN, in verbs.

2d. The French sound I-AN in nouns.

Examples:

1st. Il revient [re-vi-in] he comes back.

2d. inconvénient [in-con-vé-ni-an] inconvenience.

Notice that the same ending has, therefore, three different sounds in the following sentence:

Il convient qu'ils obviennent à cet inconvénient.

i-in i i-an

[verb singular] [verb plural] [noun]

It is proper that they (should) obviate to this difficulty.

This is a rather striking illustration of the intricacies of French pronunciation,

A FEW PRACTICAL ADVICES ABOUT PRONUNCIATION

I. Diphthong **ai**, **ais**.

It has become customary in France, and especially in Paris, to give to this diphthong the sound of "é" (close). For instance: j'étais (I was) is pronounced like été (been). Yet, as the French Academy and the Comédie Française—the two great authorities in matter of pronunciation—give still the broad sound to **ai** and **ais**, it is advisable to follow their example, without affectation.

Therefore pronounce:

j'avais	[j'avé]
j'étais	[j'été]
ils avaient	[ils ave]
ils étaient	[ils étè]
épais	[épè]
mais	[mè] etc.

II. Mistakes arising from careless reading.

There is no excuse, indeed, for the following mistakes; however, they have become so common that they must be put down on our list of "stumbling blocks."

Do not read

aimant [magnet]	for amant [lover]
alluminette [?]	" allumette [match]
Ame [soul]	" Ane [donkey]
Ane [donkey]	" an [year]
amiable [amicable]	" aimable [amiable]
bagne [convicts' prison]	" bague [ring]
billiard	" billard
brilliant	" brillant
cassé [broken]	" caché [hidden]
cheveux [hair]	" chevaux [horses]
cochon [pig]	" cocher [coachman]
cuisine [kitchen]	" cousine [cousin] fem.
dette [debt]	" datte [date] fruit
dessus [above]	" dessous [below]
enfant [child]	" enfin [at last]
exprès [on purpose]	" express [express]
faim [hunger]	" femme [woman]
fil [thread]	" fils [son]
fils [son]	" fille [daughter]
flâner [to loiter]	" plâner [to soar]
fou [mad]	" feu [fire]
gril [gridiron]	" grille [railing]
humour [wit]	" humeur [temper]
jaune [yellow]	" jeune [young]
mâçon [mason]	" Mâcon [name of a French city]
manège [riding school]	" ménage [household]
masse [mass]	" messe [church mass]
ongle [nail]	" oncle [uncle]
pain [bread]	" peine [trouble]
plus [more]	" pluie [rain]
pour [for]	" peur [fear]
poutre [beam]	" poudre [powder]
quatre [four]	" quart [quart] pron: car
repos [rest]	" repas [meal]
sage [wise]	" cage [cage]
saluter [?]	" saluer [to salute]
soif [thirst]	" soir [evening]
souffler [to blow]	" siffler [to whistle]
superintendant	" surintendant [superintendent]
un [one, a]	" on [one (pronoun)]
vieille [hurdy-gurdy]	" vieille [old] fem.

Do not pronounce

bourgois	for bourgeois [bour-joie]*
condeuteur	" conducteur [con-duc-teur]
culière	" cuiller [cu-y-err]
ditelle	" détail [dé-ta-i]
Diou	" Dieu [di-yeu]
doil	" deuil [deu-i]
ékioupedge	" équipage [é-ki-page]
iouniform	" uniforme [u-ni-form]
montaigne	" montagne [mon-ta-ni-eu]
oil	" œil [eu-i]
ouagon	" wagon [va-gon]
quaw	" quoi [k'wa]
quiou	" queue [que]
rispecte	" respect [ress-pec]
simpel	" simple [sim-ple]
sossaiété	" société [so-cié-té]†

Nota.—We hardly need to tell the reader that we do not altogether rely upon the figurative sounds given above between brackets. Our object is chiefly to call his attention to the errors often made in the pronunciation of these words.

Remember that the only way to get a correct idea of the pronunciation of a difficult foreign word is to cause an educated native to pronounce it for you.

III. Miscellaneous.

Mistakes and misunderstandings which arise from a wrong accentuation.

(Broad sounds for close sounds and vice versa.)

Do not say

J'ai suivi la châsse	[I followed the shrine] for: J'ai suivi la chasse [the hunt]
J'ai vu la côte de la Bourse	[I saw the rib of the Exchange] for: la cote [the quotations]
Le chien a donné la pâte	[the dog held out his paste] for: la patte [the paw]
Les Trois Grasses	[the Three Fat Girls] for: les Trois Grâces [the Three Graces]
Ce mâtin	[this mastiff] for: Ce matin [this morning]
Le pécheur a pris une carpe	[the sinner caught a carp] for: le pêcheur [the fisherman]
Cet arbre croit rapidement	[this tree believes quickly] for: croft [grows]
J'ai fini ma tache	[I have ended my stain] for: ma tâche [my task]

(*) French sounds.

(†) It is a common mistake to give the nasal sound to in before a vowel or a mute h: in that case, i keeps its original sound and n forms a syllable with the following vowel; i-nadmissible.

Both sounds of in are found in: inintelligible.
i-nintelligible.

La pomme de la main [the apple of the hand] for: **la paume** [the palm]
Le sol pousse dans les lieux humides [the ground grows in damp places]
 for: **le saule** [willow]

Je n'aime pas les jeunes [I do not like young people] for: **les jeûnes**
 [fast days]

Rendre lame [to give up one's blade] for: **l'âme** [one's soul]

acre [acre]	for	âcre [acrid]
fosse [ditch]	"	fausse [false, fem.]
la [the, fem.]	"	là [there]
malle [trunk]	"	male [male]
mètre [meter]	"	mâtre [master]
molle [soft, fem.]	"	môle [mole, pier]
mur [wall]	"	mur [ripe]
pale [paddle wheel]	"	pâle [pale]
sur [on]	"	sûr [sure]
hotte [basket, hamper]	"	hôte [host]

The following anecdote illustrates very well the results of a bad French pronunciation.

Some time ago a Brooklyn girl, anxious to show to some friends her proficiency in French, took up one of the latest novels from Paris, and, choosing a paragraph at random, read what purported to be:

"**Le JEUNE PÊCHEUR, étendu sous le SAULE, appelait le MATIN de tous ses VŒUX, car il lui tardait de reprendre sa TÂCHE.**"—[the young fisherman, lying down under the willow tree, was wishing eagerly (calling with all his wishes) for the return of the morning, for he longed to take up his task again.]

But, to her great confusion, her reading brought forth a tremendous peal of laughter, for she had said:

"**Le JAUNE PÉCHEUR, étendu sous le SOL, appelait le MÂTIN, de tous ses VEAUX, car il lui tardait de reprendre sa TACHE,**" which means: the yellow sinner, lying down under the ground, called the mastiff with all his calves, for he longed to take up his stain again. . . .

After the excitement had subsided, the obstinate young lady, determined to make up for her previous blunder, opened the book again and read:

"**Elle BAISA la main de la sœur: LISSE, s'écria-t-elle, vous êtes une ROSE!**"—[She kissed the hand of her sister: Lise, she exclaimed, you are a rose!]

This time the audience nearly fainted, for the unfortunate reader had made the author say:

"**Elle BAISSA la main de la sœur: LISSE, s'écria-t-elle, vous êtes une ROSSE!**"—[she pulled down her sister's hand: Smooth one, she exclaimed, you are an old nag!]

MISPRONUNCIATION

OF SOME PROPER NAMES IN FRENCH

IT is hardly necessary to say that anybody addicted to the study of French has no excuse for mispronouncing such names as **Paris**, **Marseille**, **Versailles** and so forth. Yet these nouns are constantly murdered by people who pride themselves upon being conversant with French classics—people who can translate “*Les Miserables*” or “*Notre Dame*,” but call the author **Victoh-Iougo!**

Paris	Never sound the final “ s. ”
Lyon	There is no reason for making it Lyons and pronouncing la-i-onn-ze [Engl.: li-nnce], since the names of other French cities keep in English their original spelling. Give the word the French sound: li-on .
Marseille	is not Mar-sel , but mar-cé-i [Engl.: marr-say-ee].
Versailles	Few foreigners pronounce the word correctly. They say generally: veur-sail . The correct sound is ver-sa-i [Engl.: verrs-I].
Orléans	Notice the accent and do not give to “ lé ” the English sound of “ lee .” Pronounce the last syllable like the French word an (year).
Fontainebleau	Often pronounced fountain-blue . You must say: fontaine-blé .
Boulogne	Do not dwell on the middle syllable. The “ o ” is very short.
Calais	Pronounce: kah-lé .
Genève	Avoid to call it Geneva and especially to pronounce it: djenn-ee-vah , which often causes this city to be mistaken for Genoa (djenn-o-ah), the Italian seaport.
Savoie	Do not pronounce it: sa-vo-ee , but sa-v'wa [Engl.]
Saint Cloud	“ Saint ,” without sounding the “ t. ” “ Cloud ”: cloo .
Saint Denis	“ Denis ” with the first syllable very short: d'ni [Engl.: d'nee].

Vevey	A Swiss resort. Pronounce: ve-vé [the first "e" like the "u" of nut.]
Buttes Chaumont	A park in Paris. Often mispronounced: boutte-chomount. The true pronunciation is but-chó-mon [French "u."]
Champs-Elysées	Some people find it difficult to pronounce the last word. The correct sound is é-li-zé.
Palais Royal	The last word is not: ro-ial, but roi-ial [Engl.: r'wa-ial], for the "y" stands for two "i."
Saint Eustache	A church in Paris. Eu (like the "u" of murder) stash.
La Madeleine	Not: ma-de-linne, but mad-laine.
Bastille	Is not bass-til. The last syllables have the liquid sound, like in "fille," "bille," and so forth.
Porte Maillot [at Paris]	Wrongly pronounced ma-liot by many foreigners. The correct sound is: ma-i-o [Engl.: my-oh].
Charlemagne	This king is much ill-used in English, as far as pronunciation is concerned. He is generally called either: tshale-maine, or tsha-li-mange. You get an idea of the correct sound by pronouncing the following: sharr le—like the French article ma—like the French possessive ni—like the French negative e—scarcely heard.
Millet	Notwithstanding the rules on liquid sounds, the name of this artist must be pronounced: mi-let [Engl.: me-lay].
Louis XIV.	One should come to some understanding about the pronunciation of these two words. Many people say "Louis the Fourteenth," with Louis like in French: lou-i [Engl.: loo-ee], while others pronounce "Louis Quatorze," sounding Louis like in English.
Mme. de Maintenon	Often pronounced like the French word for "now" (maintenant). This is wrong, for "an" and "ON" have by no means the same sound.
Marie-Antoinette	Avoid the sound of the English "th" in Antoinette and sound clearly the "oi" (wa).
Robespierre	Do not give to the ending the sound of the English word "pier." Pronounce Ro-bess-pi-err (with "pi" like in "pigeon.")
Richelieu	Is not rich-liou, but [Engl.] rish-lee-eu ["eu" having the sound of "u" in murder.]

Mme. de Sévigné	is not se-vig-ne but sé-vi-ni-é. Observe the accents.
Molière	Sometimes wrongly pronounced: mo-yeur. The correct sound is: mo-li-air [Engl.: mo-lee-air.]
Mme. de Staél	Is pronounced stal. [French "a"]
Montaigne	The name of this great philosopher is pronounced montagne.
Montmorency	Not mount-mo-rin-say, but mon-mo-ren-ci.
Rochefoucauld	[Engl.] rosh-foo-co.
St. Bernard	Usually pronounced in English: beur-nad. Say [Engl.] bear-narr.
Abailard	[Engl.] ah-bay-larr.
Héloïse	[Engl.] a-lo-iz, "a" like in "baker."
Jeanne d'Arc	[Engl.] j'ann d'ark, "ann" with a stress on the "a." Never put the "d" portion of the "j" like in English.
St. Saëns	A French composer. Often mispronounced. The correct sound is sens, but it cannot be rendered in English, as nasal sounds are peculiar to the French language. Some Bostonians, however, pronounce the word "aunt" with a twang which gives a remote idea of the French diphthong an (or en).
Alexandre Dumas	Not Alexander, but ah-leks-an-dre, "an" with the nasal sound.
Maréchal Niel	A well-known French general officer under Napoleon the Third. This noun is better known in America and in England as the name of a species of rose. Often mispronounced: marshal Neel. Pronounce: ma-ré-shal Ni-elle [Engl.: nee-ell].

EXERCISES**PART I.****WORDS SIMILAR IN BOTH LANGUAGES, WITH A DIFFERENT MEANING****SECTION A**

I

Dear friend:

Since you are going to town, I wish you would rent for me a large glass cabinet for my *bric à brac*, and also a bureau with about twenty pigeonholes for my private study. Have them sent here as soon as possible, through Mr. Durand, who is a relative of mine. Also please call at Duval's store and buy me:

a dull brass chandelier for the hall;
three china candlesticks;
three dozen lemons;
six citrons; five pounds of lard;
three pounds of bacon;
five pounds of raisins;
one basket of grapes;
a box of pins;
a bottle of white pine syrup;
a file;
two blinds for the dining-room;
a mat for the doorway;
a piece of blue gauze; and some tape.

I think this is about all I need for the present.

(Continued No. 2.)

2

I shall send you to-morrow at the depot by one of my servants, a little bundle containing several things which I want you to take to the hardware store: my opera glass, which is out of order; also my hunting-knife, the blade of which is broken. You will find herewith enclosed on a separate note a few particulars about the dimensions of the cabinet, blinds, etc. For the rest, as I have the greatest confidence in your buying ability, I rely entirely upon you.

I hope this will not trouble you too much. I would have sent to town old Pierre, the coachman, to do the shopping, for he had to

purchase a pair of reins for the horses; but he is busy nursing the bay **mare**, which has a kind of itch; besides, he suffers from a **spleen** disease, also from **kidney** trouble, and I do not want him to go out while this **gale** is blowing. He is not a sensible fellow and does not take good care of himself; I am afraid that, at the **rate** he goes, he will rapidly grow worse. I know you are interested in him, that is why I am giving you all these details.

Hoping you will have a pleasant journey, I remain
Yours cordially,

SECTION B

3

Did you see this **advertisement** in the "Morning Brawler?"—No. What is it about?—About the sale of Mr. John's **factory**.—Was it a large concern?—Not at all. The building itself is a mere wooden **shanty**, near the Marine **Barracks**.—Mr. John is a **bad character**, is he not?—By no means. He is a very honest man, very **gay** at times, and always **cheerful**. But when he was young, he had a **bad temper**, that is all.—When have you met him?—At the Durands', last winter; he was my **partner** at whist. Then I went to Europe with him on the same steamer, in fact in the same **stateroom**.—Is he a good conversationalist?—No. He is not well read in modern literature, for when I asked him what was his opinion of the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," he answered he had never tried it, although he had used many kinds of breakfast food!—

(Continued No. 4.)

4

Who is Mr. John's first **clerk**?—Mr. Paul.—I thought Paul was a **clerk in some attorney's office**.—He was in my **partner's** special office. But we had some difficulties about a **patent**, and he resigned.—Well, now I think of it, how much had you to pay for that **license** of mine?—Ninety francs. In France a tradesman's **license** is proportional to the **rent** of the building.—Yes, I know. Well, it is the last time I have to pay for it; I will soon retire from business, and live on my **income**.—I congratulate you. What will you do then?—Get a **pretty** cottage, a carriage, and have a "jolly" time.—I do not doubt you will keep many servants; you are so **fastidious**!—I shall get a good house-keeper; it is so **tiresome** to attend to the many details of housekeeping.—I hope your cook will be more experienced than mine; when I asked Bridget the other day if the butcher had sent the lobsters: "Yes, sir," said she. "But I sent them back; they were not ripe!"

SECTIONS A AND B

5

Arthur, this cook is impossible.—I think that you have a **prejudice** against colored **servants**.—You know very well I have no race **prejudice**.—Well, you would not do **any harm** to the negro race, but you

hate black people individually.—That cook is worse than the others.—Every cook was, since we began housekeeping. What is the trouble now?—Well, I told her: "There is three months' dust in the kitchen." She placidly retorted: "That is not my fault, madam. I have been here only a fortnight!"—Does that upset you? I would not mind such trifles. You are not a sensible woman. You had better attend to me. I am hungry and thirsty.—Will you have a mutton chop and some claret?—No. I prefer a glass of bier and some cheese. I can get that myself in the kitchen, since you are so sensitive that you cannot bear the sight of that servant.

(Continued No. 6.)

6

Well, Arthur, did you get that glass of bier?—No. I feel no more thirsty. When I entered the kitchen I saw a dirty negro, about one hundred years old, wrapped up in a blanket; he was eating a kind of stewed veal out of a glass, and looked at himself in a broken mirror. The smell and the sight were too much for me and . . . here I am.—Well, I would not mind such a trivial affair, if I were a man. Let me show you this beautiful song. I got the score to-day at Duval's.—What is it called?—"By moonlight."—Oh, I do not want to hear it. It is dreadfully commonplace.—I do not think you know it.—Maybe not, but the very title is vulgar.—Well, what about this.—What is it?—The latest novel.—What is it about?—A man of ignoble extraction who, by dint of energy and enterprise, grows to be a millionaire and a baronet.—How did he make his money?—Selling umbrellas.—That is simply disgusting! Now, if he had been in the cane business, like myself, I could have understood. I cannot see anything in an umbrella.—Well, I do. As a weather forecast.—How is that?—If you take your umbrella along, in the morning, when the weather is threatening, it is a sure sign that it will soon clear off.

PART II.

WRONG FRENCH EXPRESSIONS

7

[From a man to a woman.]

Dear Friend:

I heard with much sorrow that you were discouraged, and ready to give up your studies. You were right to apply to me and I am quite willing to help you. I have met with an accident the other day, but although I have sprained my wrist, I am able to use my tongue, if not my hand. Let me know if you will be at home to-morrow, and, if agreeable to you, I shall come for you early in the morning. In case you should not be free to-morrow, I can come on Friday; not before, for on Wednesday I have to pay a visit to an old friend of mine; and on Thursday I shall take my sister to a performance which will take place at Versailles. Now, when I think of it, can you not join us that day? Sister would be delighted to call for you on her way to the depot.

Hoping to see you soon, I remain,

Very respectfully yours,

8

Dear Jules:

I am very angry at you! How is it that you cannot find the way to leave Paris for a few days? I hoped you would visit me here before going to England; I expected to have a good time with you. Father wanted to introduce you to a friend of his, Mr. Black, who plays chess as well as you do; he plays on the violin, too, tolerably well; and is very enthusiastic about music. Mr. Black's wife plays on the banjo indifferently and sings too much for our comfort; but she is an interesting talker, and you would have enjoyed her conversation very much.

I have heard from Pierre. In a few days he will marry his former tutor's daughter, that black-eyed girl you saw at Mr. Blank's house. This young lady is worth 500,000 francs and has some expectations. In your letter you inquired about my race horses. Well, when I was at the seashore last summer, I sold them to the proprietor of the hotel—a lucky fellow who had saved much money since he is in the business.

That is all I have to say for the present. Remember me* to your brother when you see him and believe me,

Your friend,

(*) See Mistakes in Letter Writing, page 56.

[Rewrite this in French after correcting the mistakes.]

Paris, quatrième de juin 1902.

Cher monsieur:

Votre lettre est justement arrivée. Cela me donne très beaucoup de plaisir d'entendre que vous avez eu une bonne journée sur mer. J'ai lu dans le papier du dimanche que le temps est plus et plus mauvais chaque jour sur l'Océan et je craignais que votre bateau ne fût tard. Comment aimez vous l'Amérique? Combien longtemps attendez vous de passer là? Quand vous êtes à Chicago, allez et voyez Mr. Bernard, dont vous avez l'adresse et qui était un de mes pupilles. Il était né à Chicago et sait la ville très bien. Vous n'avez qu'à envoyer pour lui, dès votre arrivée. Il sera enchanté de prendre une promenade avec vous.

Quand à votre affaire, je l'ai terminée. J'ai trouvé un mécanique pour faire le travail, et on le paiera par l'heure. Vous trouverez dans cette lettre un reçu pour le prix de la fourniture de salon et du fourneau placé dans la cave: la balance de votre compte vous sera d'ailleurs envoyée le mois prochain. Mais j'ai eu du trouble avec la mademoiselle Dubois; je crois qu'elle est une fraude et que je serai obligé de m'appliquer au justice de paix.

Mais il est minuit à ma montre, et j'ai une peine dans la tête: je m'arrête donc et vous prie de croire à mes meilleures amitiés.

[There are thirty mistakes to be found in this exercise.]

PART III.

FRENCH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

[To translate into English orally or in writing.]

10

Comment se fait-il que vous discutiez avec tant d'animation? Cela n'est pas votre habitude.—Il s'agit de savoir pourquoi Mr. Durand en veut à Mr. Dubois. A quoi cela tient-il? Nous ne sommes pas d'accord là-dessus.—Cela tient, je crois, à ce que Mr. Dubois donne maintenant dans le spiritisme. J'étais en train de lire un article qu'il a publié sur ce sujet dans le "Temps."—Lui en voulez-vous, vous-même, pour cela?—Moi? Non certes. Qu'est-ce que cela me fait? Je me soucie peu de ce que mon prochain fait ou pense. J'ai assez de mes propres affaires.—Vous me faites l'effet d'un philosophe très pratique.—Mais c'est précisément la philosophie qui nous donne le sens pratique.—Et aussi l'indifférence!—Oui, l'indifférence, quelquefois. Quant à moi, si mon voisin donne dans une fantaisie qui ne gêne personne, qu'il s'en donne tant qu'il veut, cela ne m'importe pas.—Très bien, monsieur le philosophe, je ferai de mon mieux pour vous imiter.

(Continued No. 11.)

11

Il ne s'en faut pas de beaucoup que je ne vous demande des leçons de sens pratique, comme vous l'appellez. Je pourrais former une classe avec ces messieurs, et nous travaillerions à qui mieux mieux pour oublier nos maux, et surtout ceux de nos voisins. Mais je crains d'être un peu âgé pour me mettre à étudier une science si nouvelle.—Qu'à cela ne tienne! Mettez vous-y et vous verrez comme cela est facile. Vous, apprendrez vite à vous jouer des difficultés de la logique.—Et de celles de la morale?—Vous avez beau vous moquer de moi: je sais ce que je dis. Venez me voir tantôt tous ensemble et nous commencerons nos discussions.—**Nous ne vous gênerons pas?** Mais, j'y pense, un grand homme comme vous ne peut être gêné par une chose aussi vulgaire qu'un dérangement! Messieurs, c'est entendu: nous ironis cette après midi chez lui. **Vous ne sauriez être trop ponctuels,** car ce philosophe n'aurait qu'à s'impatienter: tout le bénéfice de ses études serait ainsi perdu.

PART IV.

ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS

[To translate into French orally or in writing.]

12

You have been long dressing; I had been told that you were very quick, but we have been married three months, and I never saw you yet ready in time.—I wish I could be as quick and nimble as you are. However, I do not like you to think that I am always so late at meals. To-day I was delayed down town. I have not been able to come back here before 5:30.—Well, you ought to have started earlier this morning.—I did start early. The trouble is that I took the wrong car, and when I reached Main Street, I rang at the wrong house. After I had found out where my friend, Miss So-and-So, lives, I went there just to learn that she had left for Europe a week ago yesterday. Then I went shopping, for I had to buy so many things.

(Continued No. 13.)

13

I suppose you enjoy shopping.—I enjoy the sight of the rush and hustle in the big stores. Well, when I asked what they charged for the kind of smoking-jacket you want, they charged me one hundred francs. Of course I thought it was too dear.—Thank you. Proceed.—But I bought a lovely muff for myself.—How much?—Oh, I do not know. I had it sent to your office, C. O. D.—Indeed! I wonder why you bought a muff when you have already four?—I wonder at your impudence! I had none to match the dress you promised me for my birthday.—Oh, I see. Go on.—It is of no avail. It does not interest you in the least.—Yes, it does; financially.—Later, as it looked like snow, I went to see Mrs. Durand to get an umbrella, but I could not get her to lend me one.

(Continued No. 14.)

14

I said to her: would you mind lending me that umbrella of yours with the gilded handle; but she said: I would not mind lending you anything else; you know, loaned umbrellas, like loaned books, often get lost, always get spoiled.—You ought to have reminded her of the three hundred francs I lent to her husband five years ago last spring. I fear they will get lost, too!—Indeed, you do not know how to manage. You ought to . . . do something anyway. Oh, if I were a man, I would attend to that at once. Three hundred francs, what a beautiful hat I could get for that money!—I wish you to understand that I know my business. How did you part with Mrs. Durand?—Well, she did not lend me anything, but finally borrowed five francs from me to pay the gas bill. I forgot it was all the money I had; and after I had taken the car, I perceived that I had not my car-fare. I had to alight and to walk back home.

PART VI.

ADJECTIVES WITH TWO MEANINGS

15

Is Maubeuge an important business centre?—No; it is only a small **fortified city**. I do not know any **big merchant** there.—Do you not know Mr. Dupont?—Yes; a very stout and very tall merchant who deals in wines and liquors. Last year, it was the **last year** of my stay at college in Maubeuge, I met him. He is a **good fellow**, but he is not a **brave man**, for I saw him flee before a cow, and jump over a **deep ditch**, ten feet wide.—Come, now! This is a **false story**. He could never jump in his life.—I assure you, it is a **true story**. My **deep regard** for you prevents me from telling you falsehoods.—Any-way, Dupont is a very **nice man**.—Yes, he is. He says that he is a **nobleman** by birth. As for me, I think he **looks ill-bred**.

(Continued No. 16.)

16

He may **look vulgar**; but you cannot say that he has a **vicious look**.—How many brothers has he?—Two. One is a **penniless musician**, the other a **writer without talent**.—I remember now that the latter is a **lachrymose poet**.—An **indifferent poet**, indeed. I have just read some **ill-made verses** he had written to Mme. Dubois; they are **ill-natured verses**, too.—As for the **musician**, he **looks deceitful**.—Yes; he **resembles slightly** Mr. Pierre, our old teacher, who was a **very silly fellow**.—Mr. Pierre was a **kind man**.—A **simpleton**, proud and tiresome.—I do not agree with you. He was **kindness itself**.—Well, he used to show the **same kindness** to animals, **honorable people** and **regular blackguards**.—You cannot deny that he had been once a **famous professor**.—An **excellent teacher**, indeed, who never was able to secure a good situation in this country. He had a **vulgar appearance**, too, although he pretended that his father was a **nobleman**.—I used to know his father: a **nice man**, obliging and generous.—I knew him, too; a **ladies' man**, but no **gentleman**, nor a **nobleman**, either!—Well, I see that you are rather ill-natured to-day. What is the matter?—I had a **poor dinner** at my aunt's.—Was it a **meal without meat**?—Of course, and it lasted two **tedious hours**, in "**tête à tête**".—I understand your feelings. But as I do not want you to slander any more to-day, we had better bring this conversation to a close.

KEY TO THE EXERCISES

1

Cher ami:

Puisque vous allez en ville, je désire que vous louiez pour moi une grande vitrine pour mes bibelots et aussi un bureau avec environ vingt cases pour mon cabinet. Faites les envoyer ici aussitôt que possible, par l'intermédiaire de Mr. Durand qui est un de mes parents. Aussi, s'il vous plaît, passez au magasin de Duval et achetez moi:

- un lustre de bronze mat pour le vestibule;
- trois chandeliers de porcelaine;
- trois douzaines de citrons;
- six cédrats; cinq livres de saindoux;
- trois livres de lard;
- cinq livres de raisins secs;
- un panier de raisins;
- une boîte d'épingles;
- une bouteille de sirop de pin blanc; une lime;
- deux stores pour la salle à manger;
- une natte pour la porte d'entrée;
- un morceau de gaze bleue et du galon;

Je pense que c'est à peu près tout ce dont j'ai besoin pour le moment.

2

Je vous enverrai demain à la gare par un de mes domestiques, un petit paquet contenant plusieurs choses que je désire que vous portiez au magasin de quincaillerie; ma lorgnette qui est dérangée; aussi mon couteau de chasse, dont la lame est cassée. Vous trouverez ci-inclus, sur une note séparée, quelques détails sur les dimensions de la vitrine, des stores, etc. Pour le reste, comme j'ai la plus grande confiance dans votre talent d'acheteur, je m'en rapporte entièrement à vous.

J'espere que ceci ne vous dérangera pas trop. J'aurais envoyé en ville le vieux Pierre, le cocher, pour faire les emplettes, car il avait à acheter une paire de rères pour les chevaux; mais il est occupé à soigner la jument baie qui a une sorte de gale; d'ailleurs il souffre d'une maladie de foie, aussi d'un mal de reins; et je ne veux pas qu'il sorte tant que souffre cette tempête. Ce n'est pas un garçon sensé et il ne prend pas soin de lui même; j'ai peur qu'au train dont il va, son état n'empire rapidement. Je sais que vous lui portez de l'intérêt, c'est pourquoi je vous donne tous ces détails.

Espérant que vous aurez un agréable voyage, je reste votre très dévoué.

3

Avez vous vu cette annonce dans le "Braillard du Matin?"—Non. De quoi s'agit-il?—De la vente de la manufacture de Mr. Jean.—Etais-ce un établissement considérable?—Pas du tout. Le bâtiment lui-même est une simple baraque, près des casernes de la Marine.—Mr. Jean a une mauvaise réputation, n'est-ce pas?—Pas le moins du monde. C'est un très honnête homme, très bon vivant par moments, et toujours gai. Mais, quand il était jeune, il avait mauvais caractère, c'est tout.—Quand l'avez-vous rencontré?—Chez les Durand, l'hiver dernier; il était mon partenaire au whist. Puis je suis allé en Europe avec lui sur le même bateau, en fait dans la même cabine.—Est-ce un causeur agréable?—Non. Il n'est pas au courant de la littérature moderne, car lorsque je lui ai demandé quelle était son opinion sur "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," il m'a répondu qu'il n'avait jamais essayé cela, quoiqu'il eut employé bien des espèces de "breakfast food!"

4

Qui est le premier commis de Mr. Jean?—Mr. Paul.—Je pensais que Paul était clerc de notaire.—Il était dans le bureau privé de mon associé. Mais nous avons eu des différends au sujet d'un brevet d'invention et il a résilié ses fonctions.—Eh bien, quand j'y pense, combien avez vous eu à payer pour ma patente?—Quatre vingt dix francs. En France, la patente d'un marchand est proportionnelle au loyer du bâtiment.—Oui, je le sais. Eh bien, c'est la dernière fois que j'ai à la payer, je me retirerai des affaires bientôt et vivrai de mes rentes.—Je vous fais mon compliment. Que ferez-vous alors?—Je me procurerai un joli cottage, une voiture et j'aurai du bon temps [je passerai une existence très gaie].—Je ne doute pas que vous n'ayez plusieurs domestiques; vous êtes si difficile à plaisir!—Je me procurerai une bonne femme de ménage; c'est si fastidieux de s'occuper des petits détails du ménage.—J'espère que votre cuisinière sera plus expérimentée que la mienne; quand j'ai demandé à Brigitte l'autre jour si le boucher avait envoyé les homards: "Oui, monsieur, dit-elle. Mais je les ai renvoyés; ils n'étaient pas mûrs!"

5

Arthur, cette cuisinière est impossible.—Je pense que vous avez un préjugé contre les domestiques de couleur.—Vous savez très bien que je n'ai pas de préjugé de race.—Eh bien, vous ne voudriez pas porter préjudice à la race nègre, mais vous laissez les noirs individuellement.—Cette cuisinière est pire que les autres.—Chaque cuisinière l'a été depuis que nous sommes entrés en ménage. De quoi s'agit il maintenant?—Eh bien, je lui ai dit: "Il y a trois mois de poussière dans la cuisine." Elle m'a répondu tranquillement: "Cela n'est pas ma faute, madame. Il y a seulement quinze jours que je suis ici!"—Est-ce que cela vous bouleverse? Je ne ferais pas attention à de telles bagatelles. Vous n'êtes pas une femme sensée. Vous feriez mieux de vous occuper de moi. J'ai faim et soif.—Voulez vous une côtelette de mouton et du bordeaux?—Non, je préfère un verre de bière et du fromage. Je peux me procurer cela moi même dans la cuisine, puisque vous êtes si sensible que vous ne pouvez pas supporter la vue de cette domestique.

Eh bien, Arthur, avez vous pris ce verre de bière?—No. Je n'ai plus soif. Quand je suis entré dans la cuisine, j'ai vu un **sale nègre**, âgé d'environ cent ans, enveloppé dans une **couverture**; il mangeait une espèce de **blanquette** dans un **verre**, et se regardait dans une **glace cassée**. L'odeur et le spectacle out été trop forts pour moi et me voici.—Eh bien, je ne ferais pas attention à une affaire aussi **insignifiante**, si j'étais un homme. Laissez moi vous montrer cette belle **romance**. Je m'en suis procuré la **partition** anjourd'hui chez Duval.—Comment cela s'appelle-t-il?—"Au Clair de Lune."—Oh, je ne désire pas l'entendre. C'est terriblement **trivial**.—Je ne pense pas que vous la connaissez.—Peut être que non, mais le titre même est **vulgaire**.—Eh bien, que dites vous de ceci?—Qu'est-ce que c'est?—Le dernier **roman**.—De quoi traite-t-il?—D'un homme d'**humble naissance** qui, à force d'énergie et d'esprit d'entreprise parvient à être **millionnaire** et baronet.—Comment a-t-il fait sa fortune?—En vendant des **parapluies**.—C'est simplement **ignoble**! Par exemple, s'il avait été dans le commerce des cannes, comme moi, j'aurais pu comprendre. Je ne puis rien voir d'intéressant dans un parapluie.—Moi, j'y vois quelquechose, comme présage du temps.—Comment cela?—Si vous prenez votre parapluie avec vous, le matin, quand le temps menace, c'est un signe sûr que le temps va bientôt s'éclaircir.

Chère amie:

J'ai entendu dire, avec beaucoup de chagrin, que vous étiez découragée et prête à abandonner vos études. Vous avez eu raison de vous adresser à moi, et je suis très disposé à vous aider. Il m'est arrivé un accident l'autre jour; mais quoique je me sois foulé le poignet, je suis capable de me servir de la langue, si non de la main. Faites moi savoir si vous serez chez vous demain; et, si cela vous est agréable, je viendrai vous chercher de bonne heure le matin. Au cas où vous ne seriez pas libre le matin, je puis venir vendredi; pas avant, car, mercredi, j'ai à faire une visite à un de mes vieux amis; et jeudi, j'emmenerai ma sœur à une représentation qui a lieu à Versailles. Maintenant, quand j'y pense, ne pouvez vous pas vous joindre à nous ce jour-là? Ma sœur serait charmée de passer chez vous en allant à la gare.

Espérant vous voir bientôt,

Je reste
votre très respectueusement dévoué.

Cher Jules:

Je suis très **fâché** contre vous! Comment se fait-il que vous ne puissiez pas trouver le moyen de quitter Paris pendant quelques jours? J'espérais que vous me feriez une visite ici avant d'aller en Angleterre. Je comptais m'amuser beaucoup avec vous. Mon père désirait vous présenter à un de ses amis, Mr. Black, qui joue aux échecs aussi bien que vous; il joue du violon aussi, passablement; et il est très enthousiaste en fait de musique. La femme de Mr. Black joue du banjo

médiocrement et chante trop pour notre confort; mais elle cause d'une façon intéressante, et vous auriez joui beaucoup de sa conversation.

J'ai reçu des nouvelles de Pierre. Dans quelques jours, il épousera la fille de son ancien précepteur, cette jeune personne aux yeux noirs que vous avez vue chez Mr. Blank. Cette jeune demoiselle est riche de 500,000 francs et a des espérances.

Dans votre lettre vous m'avez demandé des nouvelles de mes chevaux de course. Eh bien, quand j'étais au bord de la mer l'été dernier, je les ai vendus au propriétaire de l'hôtel (or au maître de l'hôtel), un heureux gaillard qui a gagné beaucoup d'argent depuis qu'il est dans les affaires.

C'est là tout ce que j'ai à dire pour le moment. Rappelez moi au souvenir de votre frère quand vous le verrez, et croyez moi.

Votre ami.

9

Paris, quatre juin 1902

Cher monsieur:

Votre lettre vient d'arriver. Cela me fait beaucoup de plaisir d'apprendre que vous avez eu un bon voyage sur mer. J'ai lu dans le journal du dimanche que le temps est de plus en plus mauvais chaque jour sur l'Océan; et je craignais que votre bateau ne fût en retard. Comment trouvez-vous l'Amérique? Combien de temps comptez vous passer là?

Quand vous serez à Chicago, allez voir Mr. Bernard, dont vous avez l'adresse et qui était un de mes élèves. Il est né à Chicago et connaît la ville très bien. Vous n'avez qu'à l'envoyer chercher, dès votre arrivée. Il sera enchanté de faire une promenade avec vous.

Quant à votre affaire, je l'ai terminée. J'ai trouvé un artisan pour faire le travail; et on le paiera à l'heure. Vous trouverez dans cette lettre un reçu pour le prix du mobilier de salon, et du calorifère placé dans la cave: le soldé de votre compte vous sera d'ailleurs envoyé le mois prochain. Mais j'ai eu des difficultés avec mademoiselle Dubois; je crois qu'elle est un imposteur et que je serai obligé de m'adresser au juge de paix.

Mais il est minuit à ma montre et j'ai mal à la tête; je m'arrête donc et vous prie de croire à mes meilleures amitiés.

10

How is it that you are discussing with such animation? It is not your custom.—The question is to know why Mr. Durand has a grudge against Mr. Dubois. What is the cause of it? We do not agree on that point.—That comes, I believe, from the fact that Mr. Dubois indulges now in spiritualist studies. I was just reading a paper which he wrote on that subject in the "Times."—Do you bear him a grudge yourself on that account?—I? No, indeed. What is that to me? I do not care for what my neighbor does or thinks. I have enough with my own affairs.—In my opinion, you look like a very practical philosopher.—Indeed, it is philosophy itself which gives us practical sense.—And also indifference!—Yes, "unconcern," sometimes. As

for me, if my neighbor has a hobby which inconveniences no one, let him give himself up to it! That does not concern me.—Very good, Mr. Philosopher. I shall do my best to imitate you.

11

I feel very much like asking you to give me lessons in practical sense, as you call it. I could form a class with these gentlemen and we should strive with each other in trying to forget our pains, and above all, those of our neighbors. But, I fear, I am a little old to set myself to study so new a science.—Never mind that! Set about it and you will see how easy it is. You will learn quickly to overcome the difficulties of logic.—As well as those of morals?—It is in vain for you to make fun of me; I know what I am talking about. Come to see me this afternoon all together and we shall begin our discussion.—Shall we not inconvenience you? Now, when I think of it, a great man like you cannot be inconvenienced by as vulgar a thing as a disturbance! Gentlemen, it is understood; we shall go this afternoon to his house. You could not be too punctual, for suppose this philosopher gets impatient; all the benefit of his studies would thus be lost.

12

Vous avez mis du temps à vous habiller; on m'avait dit que vous étiez très leste, mais il y a trois mois que nous sommes mariés, et je ne vous ai encore jamais vue prête à l'heure.—Je voudrais pouvoir être aussi leste et agile que vous. Cependant je n'aime pas que vous pensiez que je suis toujours si en retard pour les repas. Aujourd'hui j'ai été retardée en bas de la ville. Je n'ai pas pu revenir ici avant 5 h. 30.—Eh bien, vous auriez dû partir plus tôt ce matin.—Mais je suis partie de bonne heure. Le malheur est que je me suis trompée de tramway, et quand j'ai atteint Main Street, je me suis trompée de porte en sonnant. Après avoir découvert où mon amie, Mme. Une Telle, demeure, je suis allée là juste pour apprendre qu'elle était partie pour l'Europe, il y a eu hier huit jours. Ensuite, j'ai été faire des emplettes, car j'avais à acheter tant de choses.

13

Je suppose que vous aimez à faire des emplettes.—Je jouis de la presse et du mouvement dans les grands magasins. Donc, quand j'ai demandé ce qu'on prenait pour l'espèce de coin de feu que vous désirez, on m'a demandé cent francs. Bien entendu, j'ai pensé que c'était trop cher.—Merci. Continuez.—Mais je me suis acheté un ravissant manchon.—Combien coûte-t-il?—Oh! je n'en sais rien. Je l'ai fait envoyer à votre bureau, payable à domicile.—Vraiment! Je me demande pourquoi vous avez acheté un manchon quand vous en avez déjà quatre?—Je m'étonne de votre impudence! Je n'en avais pas pour assortir la robe que vous m'avez promise pour mon jour de naissance.—Oh, je vois. Continuez.—Cela ne sert à rien. Cela ne vous intéresse en aucune façon.—Si, cela m'intéresse: financièrement.—Plus tard, comme on aurait dit qu'il allait neiger, je suis allée voir Mme. Durand pour me procurer un parapluie, mais je n'ai pu l'amener à m'en prêter un.

Je lui ai dit: **voudriez vous bien me prêter votre parapluie au manche doré;** mais elle dit: **je vous prêterais volontiers n'importe quelle autre chose:** vous savez, les parapluies prêtés, comme les livres prêtés, "souvent se perdent et toujours s'abîment."—**Vous auriez dû** lui rappeler les trois cents francs que j'ai prêté à son mari il y a eu **cinq ans au printemps dernier:** j'ai peur qu'ils ne se perdent aussi! —**Veritablement vous ne savez pas vous arranger.** Vous devriez faire quelque chose en tout cas. Oh, si j'étais un homme, je m'occuperais de cela tout de suite. Trois cents francs, quel beau chapeau je pourrais acheter pour cet argent!—**Je désire que vous compreniez que je connais mon affaire.** Comment avez vous quitté Mme. Durand?—Eh bien, elle ne m'a rien prêté, mais finalement elle m'a emprunté cinq francs pour payer la note du gaz. J'ai oublié que c'était tout l'argent que j'avais sur moi; et, **après avoir pris le tramway,** je me suis aperçue que je n'avais pas de quoi payer ma place. J'ai dû descendre et rentrer à pied à la maison.

Est-ce que Maubeuge est une importante **place de commerce?**—Non, c'est seulement une petite **place forte;** je n'y connais aucun **fort marchand.**—Ne connaissez vous pas Mr. Dupont?—Si, un **marchand très fort et très grand qui est dans les vins et liqueurs.** L'année dernière, c'était la dernière année de mon séjour au collège à Maubeuge, je l'ai rencontré. C'est un **brave garçon,** mais ce n'est pas un **homme brave,** car je l'ai vu fuir devant une vache et sauter un fossé profond, de dix pieds de large.—Allons donc! C'est là une vraie histoire. Il n'a jamais pu sauter dans sa vie.—Je vous assure, c'est une **histoire vraie.** Ma profonde considération pour vous m'empêche de vous dire des mensonges.—En tout cas, Dupont est un **homme très gentil.**—Oui. Il dit qu'il est **gentilhomme de naissance.** Quant à moi je pense qu'il a **mauvais air.**

Il peut avoir l'**air commun;** mais vous ne pouvez pas dire qu'il a l'**air mauvais.**—Combien de frères a-t-il?—Deux. L'un est un **musicien pauvre,** l'autre un **pauvre écrivain.**—Je me rappelle maintenant que ce dernier est un **poète triste.**—Un **triste poète,** vraiment. Je viens de lire quelques **méchants vers** qu'il avait écrit à Mme. Dubois; ce sont des **vers méchants,** aussi.—Quant au musicien, il a l'**air faux.**—Oui, il a un faux air de Mr. Pierre, notre vieux maître qui était un **fier imbécile.**—Mr. Pierre était un **homme bon.**—Un **bonhomme fier et ennuyeux.**—Je ne suis pas de votre avis. Il était la **bonté même.**—Certes, il témoignait la **même bonté** pour les animaux, les **honnêtes gens** et les **francs goujats.**—Vous ne pouvez pas nier qu'il ait été une fois un **professeur fameux.**—Un **fameux professeur** vraiment, qui n'a jamais été capable de se procurer une bonne situation dans ce pays. Il avait **mauvais air aussi,** quoiqu'il prétendît que son père était **gentilhomme.**—Je connaissais son père: un **homme**

gentil, obligeant et généreux.—Je le connais aussi: un homme galant, mais pas un galant homme, ni un gentilhomme!—Bon, je vois que vous êtes un peu méchant aujourd'hui. Qu'y a-t-il?—J'ai fait un maigre dîner chez ma tante.—Était-ce un dîner maigre?—Naturellement. Et il a duré deux mortelles heures, en tête à tête.—Je comprends vos sentiments. Mais comme je ne veux pas que vous médisiez d'avantage aujourd'hui, nous ferions mieux de clore cette conversation.





